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TWO PATHS, ONE GOAL: STUDENT SUCCESS EXAMINING STUDENT AFFAIRS IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND FOR-PROFIT POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

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TWO PATHS, ONE GOAL: STUDENT SUCCESS

EXAMINING STUDENT AFFAIRS IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND FOR-PROFIT POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

In the 21st century, the potential for opportunities to obtain an education has become a reality and as a result, many students are embarking on a journey of social mobility and are assimilating into the milieu of higher learning. Affordability, accessibility, and program types are factors that have historically made public community colleges the primary option for students as they aspired to obtain higher education. However, with the rapid growth of for-profit post-secondary institutions offering similar programs, flexible hours, and accelerated degree options, students who would have traditionally enrolled at a public community college are now choosing to attend a for-profit post-secondary institution. Despite the myriad of educational opportunities, the higher education system is in a state of crisis, yet being challenged by President Obama to once again lead the world in terms of college completers.

As the community college and for-profit post-secondary sectors contend with budget shortfalls, increased scrutiny, and the challenge to increase completion rates, the division of student affairs may need to explore additional options and strategies to maintain its core mission: helping students succeed.

There is substantial research available regarding the effectiveness and efficiency efforts of the student and academic affairs divisions. However, research that compares the community college student affairs division with the for-profit post-secondary institutions is relatively non-existent. This mixed-method study seeks to bridge the gap in literature and to provide an examination of the roles, functions, and organizational structure of Student

Affairs within both sectors to identify the core dynamics that contribute most to student success.

Findings of the study suggest that while the purpose of student affairs is the same for both sectors, there are significant differences in organizational structure and how services are rendered. Further findings suggest that a relationship may exist between the number of functional services provided by the division and the overall institutional completion rates. Finally, the findings provide insight into how senior student affairs officers within both sectors measure and determine services to support student success. All of the findings, coupled with The Reid-Hart model for Student Affairs Success Dynamics, can assist institutions as they navigate the challenges of today and the future.

DEDICATION

"*Change is inevitable – growth is an option*"

-Author unknown

Life is often hard, and the path we chose to take can often lead us down a journey that we never expected and was least prepared for. However, it is from the unexpected and uncertainty that we can gain the most growth.

Alexandré Blake

To my beautiful daughter, Alexandré Blake, I love you so very much. I do not understand why you are not here and why the world will never know of your immense beauty, strength, and love. Despite the fact that you only belonged to your daddy and I for a short time, you are loved as if you were here for a lifetime. You have a big sister and brother, and a very large and extended family who love you and would have supported you tremendously. We all love you and miss you much!

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To my cousin Greg, you chose a path that was so unexpected and it led to your life ending too soon. I can only think that if you had chosen the path of education, you would still be here with that infectious smile and light-hearted personality that made everybody laugh. I truly miss you calling me "Doctor" long before I was able to see the light at the end of this tunnel. I will miss you always GREGORY – I love you man.

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To my VP, Saundra Banyard, you remain such an inspiration to me. You were and always will be the epitome of strength, integrity, and ultimate grace. Your beauty, influence, and knowledge could never be truly measured. I will miss you deeply and I am so sorry I never got the chance to say goodbye. Thank you for being a mentor, a friend, and my inspiration to always keep striving for excellence. You made this world a better place by your presence.

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To my "Big Ma", you have always been the strength and pillar of this family. Even though the mind can be cruel, and you no longer know what is going on around you, please know that without your strength and guidance, I would have been lost! To my In-Laws, Mama Reid-Hart, Brynae, Ainsley "Snake", Barry, and the girls, I am so fortunate and blessed to have you in my life. Thank you for accepting me as your daughter, sister, and "Te-Te" – I love all of you very much.

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INTRODUCTION

Background and Context

In the 21st century, the potential for opportunities to obtain an education has become a reality and as a result, many students are embarking on a journey of social mobility and are assimilating into the milieu of higher learning. Affordability, accessibility, and program types are factors that have historically made public community colleges the primary option for students as they aspired to obtain higher education. However, with the continuous growth of for-profit post-secondary institutions offering similar programs, flexible hours, and accelerated degree options, students who would have traditionally enrolled at a public community college (PCC) are now choosing to attend a for-profit post-secondary institution (FPPSI).

Bailey (2007) contends, "The growth of new types of educational institutions is potentially altering the role of community colleges within the wider landscape of higher education" (p. 1). The old attitude of "build and they will come" is no longer an option for community colleges. If the community college is to stay true to its core mission: open access, affordability, and to serve the community in which it resides; the community college will have to continue to be flexible and innovative. The community college sector is facing many challenges and must contend with increased enrollment, decreased revenue, and growing competition from for-profit post secondary institutions (FPPSI). Increased challenges are not germane to the PCC sector. The FPPSI sector is also faced with increased scrutiny, potential funding restrictions and or elimination. The division of student affairs within each sector can be drastically affected by these challenges as it is traditionally responsible for enrollment, recruitment, and the retention efforts of the college.

Developed to support student success, student affairs must re-conceptualize traditional support services in order to meet the needs of today's students (Barr, Desler, and Associates, 2000; Culp, 2005). This re-conceptualization could potentially start with a thorough examination of the student affairs division. It has often been the perception on the part of some that the for-profit sector utilizes a business model that is more effective than that utilized by the community college sector. As both sectors attempt to meet President Obama's challenge to increase the number of Americans completing college and in response to the proposed federal regulations, a re-evaluation of the student affairs division and how services are provided may be warranted since the division is the student's first point of contact.

Meeting the president's challenge will require that both the for-profit post secondary institution as well as the public community college sector each increase the success rates of its students. In order to continue to compete globally and to once again become the leading nation in education, both sectors could benefit if provided with a greater understanding of the organizational structure, roles, and functions found within student affairs and the relevancy of its changing and expanding role within the public and for-profit two year community college. Consequently, this study seeks to identify the core dynamics that contribute most to student success. The study also seeks to identify an organizational structure and design model that allows for the infusion of optimal business practices within student affairs processes while maintaining academic integrity and staying true to the profession's initial mission: helping students to succeed.

The Research Purpose

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to investigate the roles, functions, and organizational structure of student affairs within public community colleges and for-profit post secondary institutions to identify the core dynamics that contribute most to student success. The following research questions will be used to guide this mixed-method study.

Research Questions

1. Is there a difference in the success rate of students enrolled in PCC's when compared to the success rate of students enrolled in FPPSI's?
2. What differences exist in the types of student affairs services offered at the PCC's when compared to FPPSI's?
3. Is there a significant difference in the number of services provided by the Office of Student Affairs at the institutions with higher completion rates as compared to institutions with lower completion rates?
4. What is the organizational structure of student affairs at PCC's and FPPSI's?
5. How do Executive Officers within the PCC and FPPSI determine which services best support student success at their institution?

Significance

As the community college and for-profit post-secondary sectors continue to contend with budget shortfalls, draining resources, increased scrutiny, and challenges to increase completion rates, the division of student affairs may need to explore additional options and strategies to maintain its core mission: helping students succeed. There is significant research available regarding the effectiveness and efficiency efforts of the student and academic affairs divisions. However, research that compares community college student affairs division with the for-profit post-secondary institutions is relatively non-existent.

The results of the study will add to the body of knowledge on Student Affairs organizational structure and best practice. More importantly, it will address two gaps in literature: (a) a lack of formal studies comparing Student Affairs organizational structure and functions between For-Profit Post Secondary Institutions and Public Community Colleges and; (b) the availability of an organizational model that infuses business practices with academic practices to produce optimal outcomes. The information garnered through the study may aide the Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO) and the institution in its decision-making process.

Assumptions

There were two basic assumptions that were used throughout the study. First, that all participants will be truthful and honest when providing their responses and sharing their perception of the role and function of student affairs. The second assumption was that the data collected would provide a thorough and detailed depiction of the public community colleges and for-profit post-secondary sectors within the State of Illinois.

Organization of the study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one provides an introduction to the study which details the background problem, significance, assumptions, role of the researcher, organization of the dissertation, as well as definitions and acronyms used throughout the study. Chapter two, the literature review, outlines the historical development of the public community college and the for-profit post-secondary sector, including current perspectives, challenges, and also provides an overview of the theoretical framework for the study. Chapter three provides a description of the research design, methodology, selection criteria, as well as the data collection and analysis approach used for the study. The chapter ends with an overview of the limitations of the study, the ethical considerations, and a discussion of the researcher as a tool. Chapter four presents the qualitative and quantitative data collected for the study through data display and a cross-case analysis. The final section, chapter five, provides a discussion of the findings, conclusions, implications for both sectors, and recommendations for further research.

Definitions

Admissions Office: The office within the institution that is responsible for processing admittance for students.

Advisement: The office within the institution that is responsible for providing academic guidance to students.

<u>Assessment</u>: Any effort to gather, analyze, and interpret evidence which describes institutional, departmental, divisional, or agency effectiveness.

(Upcraft and Schuh, 2000, p. 4).

<u>Board of Trustees</u>: The governing body of a community college, consisting of locally-elected, locally-appointed, state-elected, or state-appointed trustees.

<u>For-Profit Post Secondary Institution (FPPSI)</u>: Institution of higher education committed to earning funds for owners and shareholders in addition to serving students.

(Letteny, 2005, p. 3).

<u>Public Community College</u>: Non-profit institutions of higher education, dedicated to serving public ends; primarily offering associate's degrees as highest degree.

<u>Completion Rate</u>: The amount of time necessary for a student to complete all requirements for a degree or certificate according to the institution's catalog. This is typically 4 years (8 semesters or trimesters, or 12 quarters, excluding summer terms) for a bachelor's degree in a standard term-based institution; 2 years (4 semesters or trimesters, or 6 quarters, excluding summer terms) for an associate's degree in a standard term-based institution (IPEDS, 2010).

<u>Models of Organizational Structure</u>

<u>Anarchical Model</u>: Anarchical, typically seen in larger institutions, is described as having student affairs professionals needing to focus on their small town to survive in the larger context of the institution.

<u>Collegial Model</u>: Built on the premise of normative orientation, collaboration, and shared decision-making reached through a consensus.

Political Model: Based upon the assumption that decision-making is a bargaining process.

Rational-Bureaucratic Model: Established routines, functions, and processes with a clear chain of command.

Public Community College (PCC): A community college is an accredited, publically-funded, 2-year, post-secondary institution that primarily offers an associate degree as the highest degree attainment.

Open Systems Theory: A systems approach to organizations that emphasizes the consideration of the relationship between a system and its environment as well as what goes on within the system. (Katz and Kahn, 1980, p. 23).

Organizational Structure: How job tasks are formally divided, grouped, and coordinated; there are six key elements that must be addressed: work specialization, departmentalization, chain of command, span of control, centralization and decentralization, and formalization (Robbins, 2003).

Reporting Structures (Student Affairs):

Category 1: Direct reporting relationship between the SSAO and the president.

Category 2: SSAO reporting to executive vice-president who reports directly to the president.

Category 3: Consolidates academic and student affairs with one person serving as administrator over academics and student affairs.

Retention Rate: Measure of the rate at which students persist in their educational program at an institution, expressed as a percentage. For four-year institutions, this is the percentage of first-time bachelors (or equivalent) degree-seeking undergraduates from the previous fall who are again enrolled in the current fall. For all other institutions this is the percentage of first-time degree/certificate-seeking students from the previous fall who either re-enrolled or successfully completed their program by the current fall (IPEDS).

Senior Student Affairs Officer: Primary authority figure over the student affairs programs and operations.

Student Affairs: The functional area of the college with the primary purpose of providing support service to students. (Barr, Desler, and Associates, 2000, p. 9).

Student Success: Completion and retention rates reported by institutions.

Acronyms

ACPA: American College Personnel Association

CSAO: Chief Student Affairs Officer

FPPSI: For-profit post secondary institution

IPEDS: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

NASPA: National Association of Student Personnel Administrators

NCES: National Center for Education Statistics

PCC: Public Community College

PRG: Policies in Higher Education conducted by the Primary Research Group

SSAO: Senior Student Affairs Officer

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The division of student affairs has always played and will continue to play an integral role in supporting student success. As institutions of higher learning strive to meet the goal of President Obama to make the United States the leader of education, the division of student affairs will be the indispensable conduit by which the goal will be achieved. The purpose of this study is to investigate the roles, functions, and organizational structure of student affairs within public community colleges and for-profit post secondary institutions to identify the core dynamics that contribute most to student success.

The first section of this chapter provides an overview of the development of the public community college (PCC) and for-profit post secondary institution (FPPSI), followed by current perspectives, including challenges and opportunities for both sectors. The next section provides a detailed overview of the growth of the student affairs division, followed by a summary of organizational structures and models. Finally the chapter concludes with an overview of the theories and concepts used to frame the study: Open Systems, Contingency Theory, and Margaret Culp’s concept which argues there are eleven factors that assist the Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO) in creating and sustaining services that truly support student success.

Historical Overview of Community Colleges

The American community college, built upon the guiding principles of open access, affordability, and serving the community in which it resides, was responsible for ensuring access to higher education to those students who would otherwise not have the ability to attend college (Cohen and Brawer, 2003). The first public community college, Joliet Junior College, formed in 1901 by J. Stanley Brown and William Rainey Harper, had a key mission of supporting student's successful academic transfer to a four-year institution. Many of the students who benefited from the community college included first generation students, underrepresented minorities, and academically underprepared high school students (Brint & Karabel, 1989; Cohen and Brawer, 2003; Townsend & Bragg, 2006).

According to George F. Zook (1947), former president of American Council on Education (ACE), following the release of the "Higher Education of Democracy: A Report of the President's Commission on Higher Education", community colleges experienced a significant growth in the latter half of the 20th Century. The report, commonly known as the Truman Commission Report, addressed the need of equal opportunity in higher education for all citizens, specifically veterans who were returning from World War II. Secondly, it focused on the same institutions addressing the needs of returning veterans. Finally, the GI Bill afforded soldiers with the financial support to attend college. The report also suggested that junior colleges change its name to "community colleges" to better reflect its evolving role in society. Despite the recommendation, two-year institutions continued to represent public institutions of higher learning and junior colleges represented the lower-division courses offered at private colleges. During the 1970's, both types of institutions began to be referred to as community colleges (Cohen and Brawer, 1996).

According to the American Association of Community Colleges (2009), since 1901, over 100 million people have attended the 1,195 public community colleges (PCC's) that now exist within the United States. Defined as any accredited institution, community colleges are either public or private institutions, that award the associate in arts or the associate in science as the highest degree; public community colleges continue to have a significant role in higher education and currently boasts enrollment of over 11.5 million students nationwide (AACC, 2009; Cohen and Brawer, 1996).

Despite its enormous popularity, growth, and accessibility, the public community college has not transcended into the realm of higher education solitarily. The for-profit post secondary institutions (FPPSI's) have also established a solid foundation as an alternative option from which students can chose to obtain their education.

Historical Overview of For-profit Post Secondary Institutions

According to David Harpool, Provost and Chief Administrative Officer at Ellis College, Phoenix University was the first for-profit post secondary institution (FPPSI), founded in 1976. Since that time, the for-profit sector in the United States has grown to over 4,000 institutions and currently serves over two million students nationwide (Harpool, 2005; Letteny 2005; Gonzalez 2009). Once operating under less constraint for marketing and recruitment practices, FPPSI's were able to proliferate in urban areas where the majority of students qualified for federal Pell grants and guaranteed student loans (Bailey 2007). Many of the first FPPSI's were founded in cities such as New York, Philadelphia, Phoenix, and Boston, and traditionally offered courses that provided skill training for "front-line jobs in high-demand fields, including business and health care and later, cosmetology and food and secretarial services" (Wilson, 2010). By the mid 1990's, for-profit institutions were mainly referred to as "trade" schools, focused on training its student population for very specific skills. "Of these, two-thirds offered shorter programs that were under one year: one-third of programs were less than six months duration and about one quarter were shorter than three months" (Bailey, 2007).

In the early 1990's, FPPSI's were bombarded with scandalous headlines of fraudulent recruitment, enrollment practices, and high student loan default rates. According to Kelly (2001), many of the institutions under scrutiny were non-collegiate institutions but the entire sector was negatively impacted. The Department of Education, in response to the negative reports, mandated stricter guidelines for institutions receiving Title IV funding: "increased the minimum length of eligible programs, decreased institutional reliance on Title IV funding sources, tightened recruiting and admissions procedures, and established more stringent accreditation standards" (Bailey, 2007 p. 1). These changes drastically shifted the makeup of many FPPSI's causing the institutions to replicate the structure of PCC's. The FPPSI's began to incorporate general education requirements as a part of its core curriculum and focused on improving student services, changes that resulted in an improved perception of the for-profit segment. Kelly (2001) contends that this change resulted in the development of accredited for-profit postsecondary schools or Accredited Career Colleges.

Current Perspectives of FPPSI

Forty years ago, less than 100,000 students attended for-profit colleges across the country. Converging on the student that PCC's and traditional four-year institutions tended to ignore, FPPSI's quickly realized the potential for establishing a stronghold within the domain of higher education. FPPSI offered flexible class schedules to working-class adults, affording them the opportunity to gain workable skills that could lead to better paying jobs. The strategy to focus on the "ignored" student and offering flexible schedules to working adults has had a significant positive result for FPPSI enrollment across the country.

Although it has experienced enormous growth, the FPPSI sector continues to focus on its initial mission of providing flexible schedules to working adults but now has a stronger emphasis on degree attainment and liberal arts education. Compared to only 10 percent in 1990, ninety percent of FPPSI's now offer associate, bachelor, or professional degrees and only 30 percent of the student population attend on a part-time basis.

The University of Phoenix boasts the highest enrollment of institutions within the for-profit sector. Enrollment has grown from 25,100 students in 1995 to 455,600 today. Astoundingly, only fifteen years ago, the University of Phoenix was about the same size as George Washington University. Today, its enrollment is larger than the entire undergraduate enrollment of the Big Ten. If current trends continue, it is estimated that the entire FPPSI enrollment sector of two million will double by the year 2015 (Gonzalez, 2009). Table 1 provides an illustration of the growth and enrollment trends for ten of the largest publicly traded FPPSI during the past fiscal year and one institution, Kaplan, which is not publicly traded.

Table 1.
Enrollment of FPPSI

Institution	Fall 2009 Enrollment	Growth from 2008	Beyond the Numbers
Apollo Group (U. of Phoenix)	443,000	22.3%	Largest private university in the country
Education Management	136,000	22.7%	Best known for Argosy U. and Art Institutes brands
Career Education	113,900	18.6%	Le Cordon Bleu in the United States and Canada American InterContinental University
DeVry	101,648	37.1%	Caribbean medical school; recently expanded, with nursing offerings and an acquisition in Brazil
Corinthian Colleges	93,493	25.9%	Focuses on certificates (64 %) and associate-degree programs (31 %) - recently purchased Heald College.
ITT Educational Services	79,208	28.7%	Diversifying with the purchase of the formerly nonprofit Daniel Webster College, in New Hampshire
American Public Education	55,300	42.2%	Its flagship, all-online American Military University draws 67 percent of its students from the ranks of the military but is now looking to diversify its enrollment base
Bridgepoint Education	54,894	79.7%	Uses its online offerings and liberal transfer policy to cater to students seeking to complete their degrees
Strayer Education	54,317	21.9%	Bachelor's (56 %) and Master (27 %)
Grand Canyon Education	34,218	55.8%	This six-year-old company considers the Christian focus and online offerings of its namesake university as crucial pieces of its enrollment draw, which includes 62 percent in pursuit of master's degrees.
Kaplan Higher Education	103,800	28%	Owned by the Washington Post

Note. Adapted from “Enrollment Growth of For-Profit Sector” by Blumenstyk, G. and Fuller, A. 2010, Chronicle of Higher Education.

Current Perspective of PCC

The public community colleges are also experiencing increases in its enrollment, albeit, not as rapid as the for-profit sector. In comparison to FPPSI's, the majority of PCC's, relying heavily on state and local funding, find themselves having increased enrollment, but a decrease in availability of financial resources to support the needs of its growing population. According to a recent study conducted by The American Association of Community Colleges and Sallie Mae (2006), community colleges are faced with daily challenges: lack of state/local funding, under-prepared students, low student retention, and rising technology costs. According to the Integrated Post-Secondary Educational Data System (IPEDS), state appropriations account for almost 40% of the revenue of public community colleges (2010). Figure 1 illustrates revenue sources for community colleges.

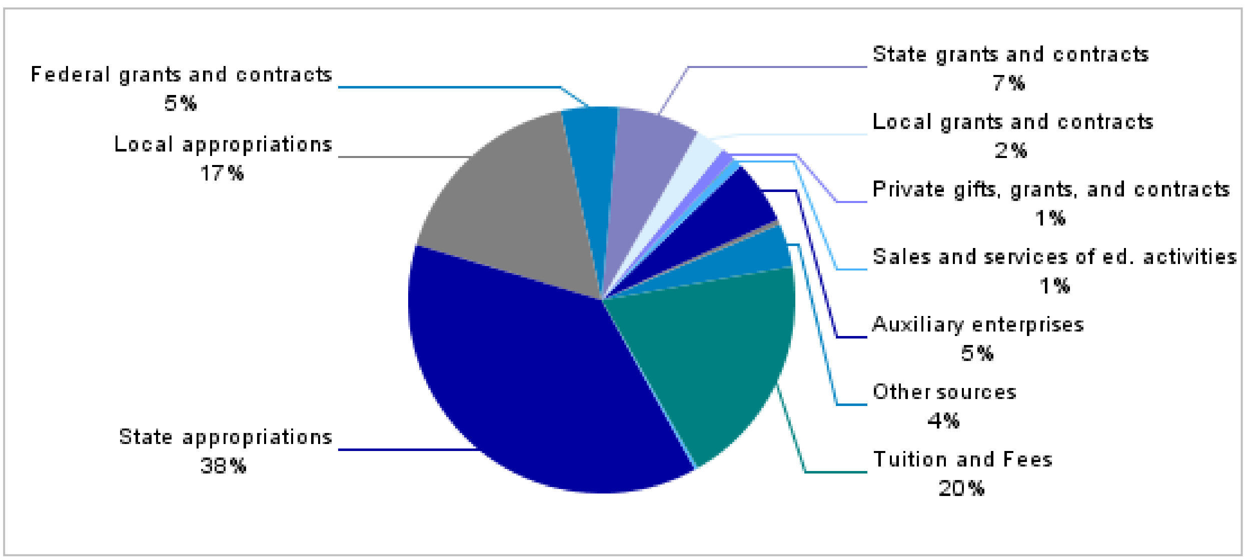


Figure 1. Revenue source for public community colleges.
Copyright of 2010 by the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

While the struggling economy continues to impel dislocated workers toward the front doors of their local community colleges, decreased state appropriations has resulted in program and personnel cuts. Additionally, some PCC's are forced to increase its tuition rates, resulting in inaccessibility to the very community it serves. Leaders within the public community college sector are finding themselves in a unique situation that has never been faced before - turning students away. "For us to turn away students is anathema. We are open-enrollment institutions. It's in our DNA," said Norma Kent, Vice President of Communications of the American Association of Community Colleges (2010). A report conducted by Katsinas & Tollefson for the Education Policy Center (2010) further depicts the bleak reality of the financial breakdown of state support for institutions of higher learning. By the end of the fiscal reporting year in 2008, funding had dropped by -7% and within the first quarter of 2009, state revenue had dropped by -11%.

Colleges across the nation have been negatively impacted by the declining support of state funding, but community colleges have experienced the most detrimental impact.

> "No education sector had more cuts in state operating budget support than did the community college; In fiscal year 2009, Community colleges, saw mean declines of -1% as compared to HBCU's, regional universities, and flagship universities with a decline of -0.03%, -0.85% and -0.1%. Each sector had to meet inflation increases and program retooling costs from existing budgets, while enrollment continued to grow" (Katsinas & Tollefson, 2010).

The American Recovery and Relief Act of 2009, provided one-time financial support to the states to obviate deeper cuts and to balance program costs, however, many of the states are concerned with what will happen when the funds are depleted in 2011. As a result, many institutions across all sectors of higher education are being forced to increase its tuition rates. In addition to tuition increases, public community colleges are faced with restructuring its core functions due to state appropriations not keeping pace with increasing enrollment of the PCC's. Table 2 illustrates the projected changes in community college functions.

Table 2**.**
Predicted Changes in CC Functions

	FY 2007 – 2008			FY 2008 - 2010			Two Year Change		
Function	Strengthen	Stay	Weak	Strengthen	Stay	Weak	Strengthen	Stay	Weak
G .E./Transfer	52%	48%	2%	20%	69%	10%	-32%	21%	8%
CTE	63%	33%	2%	23%	63%	15%	-40%	30%	13%
Non Credit	29%	60%	11%	45%	43%	12%	16%	-17%	5%
Dev Education	28%	67%	4%	18%	61%	20%	-10%	-6%	16%

**Data adapted from The Education Policy Center (2010)*

The Illinois Community College system is not exempt from the realities of increased enrollment with a dwindling budget. Head count and full-time equivalency (FTE) for spring 2010 enrollment at Illinois PCC's had a record high enrollment of 390,142 students, a 7% increase from spring 2009, however, revenue was down. "The state borrowed \$3.4 billion from its pension fund to pass a budget that is \$7 billion less in FY2010 than in FY2009 and a tax increase did not pass the General Assembly" (ICCB, 2010; Katsinas & Tollefson, 2010).

Despite the drop in state appropriations to the public community college sector, the institutions are still expected to provide open, accessible, high-quality education to its diverse population, many who are often academically underprepared, first-generation, low-income students. In response to the population of students entering its doors, the PCC sector offers a wide array of support services to its students. However, because of the large number of services offered at the PCC sector, argument has been made that too many services are offered and it is negatively impacting student success due to issues with the delivery of services. Bailey (2005) asserts, "The colleges' breadth and diversity do complicate the delivery of high quality student services, but they make such services that much more important. The choice and variety available to students may be assets that allow students to discover their interests and broaden their education, but they will not be very effective if students are not provided adequate information and guidance to help them navigate the complexity and make informed choices" (p. 54).

President's challenge

President Obama has challenged the nation to once again have the highest proportion of college graduates by the year 2020 and promised to provide the necessary support needed to make this goal a reality. The for-profit post-secondary institutions and public community college sector both play an important role in meeting this challenge. However, each college should be prepared to address the unique challenges they each face: financial constraints and academically underprepared students for the PCC's; continued scrutiny over its role and legitimacy in higher education for the FPPSI's. Additionally, each institution must also be prepared to respond to the proposed regulations by the Federal Government regarding Title IV eligibility and federally funded student loans.

Challenged to increase its retention and completion rates, President Obama has urged higher education institutions to increase the number of graduates with a specific appeal to PCC's to produce five million more graduates by the 2020 deadline date and has proposed billions of dollars to help them meet the goal (White House, 2009). While trying to maintain its open and accessible missions, PCC's aren't as nimble in responding to operational changes and thus PCC's are struggling with expanding its capabilities to serve its burgeoning enrollment (Wilson, 2010). However, the value PCC's represent in educating America is undeniable, attainment would cease to exist for millions of students if not for the opportunities the PCC provides.

Bailey (2007), believes that the once "overly negative" discernment of FPPSI's has lessened and that a more positive perception has emerged. Arne Duncan, the United States Secretary of Education, defends the for-profit sector by declaring there are "a few bad apples" that diminishes the status of FPPSI's. He also emphasized "the vital role that these institutions play in providing job training and fulfilling President Obama's goal of making the United States the highest nation with college graduates by 2020" (Fuller, 2010). Even with the praise, there is still much skepticism and concern regarding suspected abuse by FPPSI's. Democratic Senator, Tom Harkin wrote, "While for-profit colleges have a responsibility to their shareholders, they also have a responsibility to provide educational value to their students, and an obligation to ensure that the federal dollars they receive are well spent" (Harkin, 2010). There is much concern that FPPSI's have been burdening its students with high debt-to income loads and as a result, they are more likely to default on student loans. One measure that is currently in place to monitor loan management is a stipulation that all schools with a default rate of 25 percent or higher for three consecutive years face the possibility of losing its eligibility to receive Title IV funding. The Senator plans to hold a series of hearings to review federal spending at FPPSI's to ensure that students are acquiring knowledge and skills that would lead to gainful employment to pay off the debt they accrued at the FPPSI.

It would be remiss to ignore the tremendous role the FPPSI's will have in meeting President Obama's challenge for 2020. The percentage of Associate degrees conferred by FPPSI's doubled (from 55,800 to 126,900) between 1998 and 2008, as compared to 27% (from 455,100 to 578,500 degrees) by PCC's (NCES, 2010). Students who attend FPPSI's are also completing their associate degrees at a faster rate: approximately 25.4 months in comparison to students at the PCC's who complete in 32 months. Table 3 shows the comparison of degrees conferred by each sector.

Table 3.
Associate Degrees Conferred

	Number of degrees conferred					% distribution of degrees conferred			
	Total	Public	Total	Not-for-profit	For-profit	Public	Total	Not-for-profit	For-profit
1995–96	555,216	454,291	100,925	50,678	50,247	81.8	18.2	9.1	9
1996–97	571,226	465,494	105,732	49,168	56,564	81.5	18.5	8.6	9.9
1997–98	558,555	455,084	103,471	47,625	55,846	81.5	18.5	8.5	10
1998–99	559,954	448,334	111,620	47,611	64,009	80.1	19.9	8.5	11.4
1999–2000	564,933	448,446	116,487	46,337	70,150	79.4	20.6	8.2	12.4
2000–01	578,865	456,487	122,378	45,711	76,667	78.9	21.1	7.9	13.2
2001–02	595,133	471,660	123,473	45,761	77,712	79.3	20.7	7.7	13.1
2002–03	634,016	498,279	135,737	46,183	89,554	78.6	21.4	7.3	14.1
2003–04	665,301	524,875	140,426	45,759	94,667	78.9	21.1	6.9	14.2
2004–05	696,660	547,519	149,141	45,344	103,797	78.6	21.4	6.5	14.9
2005–06	713,066	557,134	155,932	46,442	109,490	78.1	21.9	6.5	15.4
2006–07	728,114	566,535	161,579	43,829	117,750	77.8	22.2	6	16.2
2007–08	750,164	578,520	171,644	44,788	126,856	77.1	22.9	6	16.9

Adapted from National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2010.

Another criticism of the for-profit sector is that it does not offer an array of degree options when compared to the public community college sector. In reality, the FPPSI's currently offer the programs that will be in high demand over the next ten years; are highly focused on completion; are poised to expand the students they serve by focusing on recent high-school graduates, veterans, and the Hispanic population (Coleman and Vedder, 2008; Merisotis 2010; and Gonzalez, 2010).

Department of Education Title IV Regulations

The Obama Administration has proposed fourteen new regulations in an attempt to ensure program integrity for FPPSI's and PCC's. If passed, each rule would have a different impact on how the institutions provide services to its students. According to the United States Department of Education (2010), the first five regulations focus on ensuring that only eligible students receive federal funds; regulations six through eight protects consumers from misleading recruitment practices and clarifies State oversight responsibilities; and finally, regulations nine through fourteen clarifies eligible courses and the appropriate aid amount for the courses:

1. **High School Diploma:** The proliferation of high school diploma mills has called the validity of some secondary school credentials into question. The proposed regulations would require institutions to develop and follow procedures to evaluate the validity of a student's high school diploma if the institution or the Secretary has reason to believe that the diploma is not valid or was not obtained from an entity that provides secondary school education.
2. **College Credits:** The proposed regulations would extend eligibility for federal student aid to students without high school diplomas after they successfully complete six credits of college work. This implements a provision that was included in the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008.
3. **Ability to Benefit:** The Department is responsible for approving test materials developed by testing companies. The Government Accountability

Office recommended a number of ways that the Department could improve its oversight of how ATB tests are approved and administered.

4. **Satisfactory Academic Progress:** Every institution is required to have satisfactory academic progress policies. Audits and institutional program reviews have uncovered policies that meet the current regulatory standards but permit students to receive funds even though they may not be meeting the institution's progress standards. The proposed regulations would require a structured and consistent approach to evaluating a student's academic work, while continuing to provide flexibility to institutions in establishing their policies.
5. **Verification:** Each year, a number of students are required to confirm the information on their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Due to changes in the law and a new data retrieval process with the Internal Revenue Service, the proposed changes would, in many cases, reduce the amount of information students would have to provide to institutions.
6. **Misrepresentation:** During public hearings and negotiated rulemaking sessions, the Department heard numerous complaints from students enrolled in programs where they felt misled on what was and was not being offered, the way programs could be paid for, and their job prospects upon completion. To protect consumers, the proposed regulations strengthen the Department's authority to take action against institutions engaging in deceptive advertising, marketing, and sales practices.

7. **Incentive Compensation:** The Department heard reports of aggressive recruiting practices resulting in students being encouraged to take out loans they could not afford, or enroll in programs where they were either unqualified or could not succeed. Though current laws prohibit schools from compensating admissions recruiters based solely on success in securing student enrollment, regulations known as "safe harbors" allowed this practice to go on under certain circumstances, which we believe violate the spirit of the law. The proposed regulations will remove all the "safe harbor" provisions.
8. **State Authorization:** State authorization is required by the Higher Education Act for a postsecondary institution to participate in federal student aid, and other federal funding programs. Some states have failed to establish how they approve and monitor postsecondary programs. The proposed regulations would clarify this important State responsibility.
9. **Credit Hour:** Credit hours are the metric used by the Department to measure eligibility for federal funding. Currently there is no standard definition for a credit hour, which has led to reports of institutions awarding more credits (and drawing down more federal funds) than are deserved. To address this issue, the regulations define a credit hour and establish procedures for accrediting agencies to determine whether an institution's assignment of a credit hour is acceptable. Recognizing that "seat time" is not the goal, the proposal allows for equivalent measurement of learning outcomes.

10. **Written Agreements:** A postsecondary institution is allowed to deliver a portion of another institution's educational program through a written arrangement. Problems have surfaced when the two institutions are controlled by the same entity or do not meet certain participation requirements. The proposed regulations limit the amount of a program that can be provided by a school in an arrangement and prohibit arrangements between ineligible institutions that have had their Federal student aid participation revoked.
11. **Retaking Coursework:** Currently students who repeat coursework cannot have the course they repeat count towards the calculation of a full-time course load. The proposed regulations would expand the definition of full-time student by allowing such courses to count if the student is in a program that registers by the term or semester.
12. **Determining When a Student Has Withdrawn:** Currently, loopholes complicate the measure of how much federal funding must be paid back if a student drops out of a program. The proposed regulations would eliminate loopholes and clarify the calculation of returning federal funds to the Department by defining when a student is considered to have withdrawn from a program. It will also clarify the circumstances under which an institution is required to take attendance for the purpose of calculating a return of federal funds.

13. **Disbursing Federal Student Aid Funds:** As it stands now, many students are not receiving their Federal student aid funds in enough time to obtain their books and before the start of school. The proposed regulations would ensure that the neediest recipients can acquire books and supplies by the seventh day of their payment period.
14. **Disclosures regarding Gainful Employment:** The Department is proposing that proprietary institutions of higher education and postsecondary vocational institutions provide prospective students with each eligible program's graduation and job placement rates, and that colleges provide the Department with information that will allow determination of student debt levels and incomes after program completion. The Department is still developing metrics to hold programs accountable for meeting federal requirements.

The proposed rules could potentially have a severe impact on both the for-profit and public community college sector, imposing stricter regulations on institutions eligibility for Title IV funding, including student loans. The proposed rules are designed "to protect students from misleading and overly aggressive recruiting practices; provide consumers with better information about the effectiveness of career college programs; and ensure that only eligible students and programs receive aid" (Glickman, 2010). While it is evident that the FPPSI's will experience the most impact, the PCC's are not immune if the regulations are approved. FPPSI's are concerned that thousands of their programs would have to close; PCC's have expressed concern the new rules could result in an emasculating of autonomy, less flexibility in how states oversee programs, and create the need for arduous reporting requirements that would not benefit students or the institution (Gonzalez, 2009). More specifically, if the rule on gainful employment is passed, all institutions of higher learning, including PCC's and FPPSI's, will be required to adhere to the new regulations and must report to prospective students its program's completion rates, job-placement rates, and job placement default rates. Historically, FPPSI's have tended to do a better job at tracking job placement rates and establishing connections with the workforce to establish career tracks as compared to PCC's. Bailey (2005) contends, "Most community colleges have no systematic data on the educational and employment experience of their students after they leave" (p 56).

As both sectors continue to respond to budget cuts, decreased resources, and plan for the proposed Title IV changes by the Department of Education, the role of Student Affairs will continue to be a critical component in ensuring that the mission and goals of the institution are achieved.

Overview of Student Affairs

The development of student affairs was complex and ambiguous in regards to its purpose. According to Barr & Desler (2000), the earlier deans of student services did not have a budget, worked without defined roles and resources, and had little or no communication with other departments across the campus. In essence, it was through their emergent roles and activities that the division of student affairs was formed. Terry O' Banion (1997), former president of League for Innovation in the Community College League, stressed the first role of student personnel worker was one of regulator or repressor and the student personnel profession was created largely because of the president's needed help to regulate student behavior.

Further debate and incongruence regarding the role of student affairs is evidenced by Culp (2005); Dassance (1994); and Barham and Scott (2007) who contend~~s~~ that after 70 years, the role of student affairs has still not reached a congruent consensus. Beginning in the 1960's and changing with each decade, student affairs practitioners initially referred to themselves as student-centered, client-centered, customer-centered, and most recently, learning-centered. The student affairs profession has also been coined as having three distinct archetypes that have guided its direction: service, development, and learning, all of which have been named synonymously for those professionals working in the field: student services, student development, and most recently, student affairs. Despite its many name changes and synonyms, the central focus has remained constant: help students succeed.

The Student Personnel Point of View originally created by the American Council on Education in 1937, revised in 1949, was designed to help provide structure and guidance for professionals working within student affairs and later, insight and guidance for the student affairs administrator. The objectives were to ensure that institutions of higher learning provided services that aided in the overall development of the student: physically, socially, emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually. To ensure success of its students, the report insisted that the institution must provide an environment that induces the student to do the following:

1. Achieves orientation to the college environment
2. Learns balanced use of his physical condition

3. Progressively understands self
4. Understands and uses his emotions
5. Develops lively and significant interests
6. Achieves understanding and control of financial resources
7. Progresses toward appropriate vocational goals
8. Develops individuality and responsibility
9. Discovers ethical and spiritual meaning in life
10. Learns to live with others
11. Progresses toward satisfying and socially acceptable sexual adjustment
12. Prepares for satisfying, constructive post-college activity

The report further states that the institution must be very selective and strategic when selecting student affairs professionals and must assist the individual development of students and their place in society by ensuring optimal provisions for:

1. The process of admissions, not as a credit-counting service, but a first step in the counseling process to interpret the institution to the student, his family, and high school teachers in terms of requirement for success, its services, and its ability to satisfy educational and personal needs of student
2. The keeping of records and their use in the improved understanding of, and service to, the individual student as contact is not only regulated within the classroom, but in all phases of the college experience

3. Service to the student of trained, sympathetic, counselors to assist the student in thinking through educational, vocational, and personal adjustment issues
4. Physical and mental health services, with an emphasis primarily on educating student on personal hygiene counseling
5. Remedial services in areas of speech, reading, study habits
6. Supervision and integration of housing and food services, including education in group living and social graces
7. Program of activities to induce student to new life and environment
8. Encouragement and supervision of significant group activities arising from natural interest of student
9. Program of recreational activities designed to promote appropriate lifetime interests and skills
10. Treatment of discipline as an educational function designed to modify personal behavior patterns and to substitute socially acceptable attitudes for those which have precipitated unacceptable behavior
11. Financial aid to worthy students, not as a dole, but as an educational experience in personal budgeting and responsibility
12. Opportunities for self-help through part-time and summer employment, geared towards vocational objectives of the student
13. The proper induction, orientation, and counseling of students from abroad

14. The enrichment of a college and post-college life through a well-integrated program of religious activities, including interfaith programs and individual religious counseling
15. Counseling for married students and for those contemplating marriage to prepare them for broadening family and social responsibilities
16. A continuing program of evaluation of student personnel services and of the educational program to ensure the achievement by students of the objectives for which program is designed

Supported by the report, the success of the student was largely dependent on the institutions ability to provide comprehensive services to its student body. The validity of the document was embraced by student affairs and "was accepted largely unchallenged for thirty years, and has not been superseded even now" (Sandeen and Barr 2006).

According to Barham and Scott (2007), by the mid 1970's and 1980's, due to societal influences and new types of students enrolling in college, the paradigm of student affairs shifted from student services to student development. This shift was primarily a result of new research that had been conducted by psychologists such as Skinner and Maslow which led to an "insurgence of inquiry on individual development that challenged long held beliefs of educators and caused an influx of research on college students" (Barham & Scott, 2007).

It was also during this time period that "A Perspective on Student Affairs" was created, which was written in the spirit of major assumptions and beliefs that guided the profession (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, 1986). The research laid the foundation for expectations of the student affairs professionals, the student, and the institution. The first of which includes support and explanation of the values, mission, and policies of the institution as well as participation in the governance of the institution and shared responsibility for the decision-making process. The second expectation is that the institutions should assess the educational and social experiences of students in an effort to improve institutional programs and provide and interpret information about students during the development and modification of institutional policies, services, and practices. The third expectation is that the institution will provide a safe and secure campus while effectively managing the human and fiscal resources for which student affairs is responsible. There is an expectation that there will be set standards for students that support and advance the institutional values. The institution should advocate student participation in institutional governance while providing essential services such as admissions, registration, counseling, financial aid, health care, housing and placement while encouraging faculty-student interaction in programs and activities. The institution should be an student advocate and help create ethnically diverse and culturally rich environments; assume leadership for the institution's responses to student crises; be intellectually and professionally active; establish and maintain effective working relationships with the local community, and finally; coordinate student affairs programs and services with academic affairs, business affairs, development, and other major components of the institution.

This paradigm of student development continued for over a decade before shifting to a model of student learning. It was at this time that other important documents were also created: Tomorrow's Higher Education: A Return to the Academy, by Robert Brown

(American College Personnel Association, 1996); The Student Learning Imperative (ACPA, 1994); and Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs (ACPA & NASPA, 1998) which helped to create a framework to guide Student Affairs best practices. The principles encouraged institutions to accept the new paradigm of student learning which still exists today. “The choice of student affairs educators is simple: We can pursue a course that engages us in the central mission of our institutions or retreat to the margins in hope that we will avoid the inconvenience of change” (ACPA & NASPA, 1998, 1.) The Principles of Good Practice described a set of behaviors that exemplified good practice in student affairs:

1. Engaging students in active learning
2. Helping students develop coherent values and ethical standards
3. Setting and communicating high expectations for learning
4. Using systematic inquiry to improve student and institutional performance
5. Using resources effectively to achieve institutional mission and goals
6. Forging educational partnerships that advances student learning
7. Building supportive and inclusive communities (ACPA & NASPA, pp. 3-4).

The creation of these best practices along with the publication of The Student Learning Imperative (1994), which focused on stimulating discussion on how student affairs professionals could intentionally create conditions to enhance student learning and development, contributed to the paradigm shift of student affairs from student development to student learning (Barham and Scott, 2007). Despite the introduction of best practices and guided direction for student affairs, a single definition for student affairs still does not exist today. The types of services provided are often multifaceted and how the services are delivered depends on the organizational structures that exist within the institution.

Organizational Structure of Student Affairs

While there are varying definitions of organizational structure, the following definition has been selected for this particular study: organizational structure defines how job tasks are formally divided, grouped, and coordinated (Robbins, 2003). This definition was selected because it provides a comprehensive description of organizational structure specifically for the division of student affairs in higher education.

The organizational structure of student affairs is a phenomenon that has not been studied as extensively as organizations studied within the corporate realm; as a result, the data available is not very exhaustive and is limited in scope. “While specific individual units within the student affairs division varied greatly, the organizational structure was similar no matter what type of collegiate institutions they were” (Sandeen and Barr 2006). The data that is available indicates that the organizational structures are typically functional in nature, are pyramid shaped and have varied hierarchical levels of reporting.

One contributing factor for the lack of variation in student affair’s organizational structure is the institutions inability to be flexible and fluid. According to Chickering (2003), it is difficult for change to occur in higher education because of a prevailing rigid structure. Any change that does occur is typically in response to budget cuts and decreases in resources and human capital, or to improve communication issues as the functions by division grow in size. Larger sized organizations tend to have a matrix integrated into the organizational structure to improve communications within its varied complex divisions and to operate more efficiently; whereas smaller institutions have its staff in a general role but also assume responsibilities in other functions, resulting in a flatter less complex structure. In the smaller institutions, directors typically report directly to the Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO), but larger organizations have a layer of managers between directors and the SSAO (Sandeen and Barr 2006; Culp 1995). The three basic reporting categories are depicted in Table 4 below:

Table 4.
Reporting Structures

Category	Reporting Structure	Pro/Cons
One	Direct reporting relationship between the SSAO and the president	SA is in position of equality and influence Invites turf building and alienation
Two	SSAO reporting to executive vice-president who reports directly to the president	Potential to dilute the influences and voice of student affairs
Three	Consolidates academic and student affairs with one person serving as administrator over academics and student affairs	Presents unique opportunities for collaboration and coordination Increases risk that interest of SA will be subordinate

Ambler (2004) posits the following regarding the structure and factors within student affairs:

1. The programs and services found within the organizational units of student affairs within all collegiate types and sizes had become large, comprehensive, and very diverse;
2. Many student affairs programs had been assigned full responsibility for programmatic and financial operations of traditional student service auxiliaries;

3. The elevation of SSAOs to the vice president and executive management level was virtually universal at all classification types of higher education institutions; and
4. Although he observed a growing trend for the SSAO to report to a chief administrative officer, (a) the structure of student affairs divisions had become highly complex and specialized in all types of colleges and universities, (b) the span of control varied widely among all types of institutions, (c) and the title given to both student affairs officers and staff varied widely across types of institutions (Ambler, 2004).

In essence, while organization structure does not have a wide variation, there are varying models that prevail within the organizational structure.

Models of Organizational Structure

Five models of organizational structure within student affairs was initially defined by Knapp (1988), four of the models entailed the Chief Student Affairs Officer (CSAO) reporting directly to the president or CEO, whereas, the fifth model had a middle layer with one administrator responsible for academics and student affairs, who reported directly to the president. For the purpose of this study, the Chief Student Affairs Officer (CSAO) will be referred to as the Senior Chief Student Affairs Officer (SSAO). Ambler (2004), Kuh, (1983); Whit and Shield (1987); and Birnbaum (1988) identified four models which included the rational-bureaucratic model, the collegial model, the political model and anarchical model. The rational-bureaucratic model has established routines, functions, and processes with a clear chain of command. The collegial model is built on the premise of normative orientation, collaboration, and shared decision-making reached through a consensus. The political model is based upon the assumption that decision-making is a bargaining process. The fourth model, anarchical, typically seen in larger institutions, is described as having student affairs professionals needing to focus on their small town to survive in the larger context of the institution.

There is not a definitive model that best fits all student affairs divisions; instead there exists a myriad of models that fit into the overall organizational structure (Manning, Kinzie, & Schuh (2006). In order to garner a holistic understanding of student affairs, it is imperative that the various models are understood.

Span of Control

Regardless of institutional type, one of the biggest differences that exist within the organizational structure is span of control, which is defined as the number of subordinates reporting to a manager. The number of people reporting directly to the senior student affairs officer (SSAO) can be as low as four and as high as seventeen or more. The size of the organization often has a direct impact on the number of staff members but the type of institution does not contribute to span of control. A multitude of hierarchical levels, ranging between one to five levels, also exist within varying institutions. In addition to the number of people reporting to the SSAO, there is also a vast difference in the number of functional units reporting to Student Affairs.

Service Areas

Functional units or services within student affairs may include such areas as: (a) advising; (b) articulation; (c) assessment; (d) counseling; (e) orientation; (f) recruitment and retention, depending on the demands of the institution. The type and number of services are often determined by the regulations, needs of the student body, and the availability of staff and resources. According to the 2008 Survey of Student Retention Policies in Higher Education conducted by the Primary Research Group (PRG), in addition to differences in organizational structure, there are astounding differences in funding, services provided, and academic readiness of students enrolled at PCC's and FPPSI's. PRG data detail the following divergences: public colleges spent four times the amount of dollars on its academic advising unit than private colleges and employed six times as many individuals in academic advising. Nevertheless, students enrolled at FPPSI's completed their associate degree at a sixty percent rate compared to twenty-two percent rate for students attending PCC's. Additionally, PCC's reported that 36% of its student population required special assistance in Reading and Writing compared to 12.56% at the FPPSI. There are also differences present in the admission policies, specifically, public community colleges are required to maintain an open door policy accepting all students and providing services to under-prepared students whereas the for-profit post-secondary institutions are not obligated to do so (NCES, 2009).

Regardless of the variation in structure, span of control, hierarchical levels, and types of functions provided, the role of student affairs continues to play a critical role in supporting the mission and vision of the institution and supporting the success of students.

Conceptual Framework

Recognizing that one single theory could not adequately address all complexities of student affairs, the Open Systems and Contingency Theory, as well as concepts from Margaret Culp's Essential Factors for Student Affairs were used to frame this study.

Regardless of the type of institution, the type of organizational structure, or the unique needs of the student population, Margaret Culp (2005), asserts there are eleven essential factors that assist the SSAO in creating and sustaining functions that truly support the success of its students. These factors include: (a) supportive leadership; (b)mission-driven organizational structure; (c) data based culture; (d) adequate resources; (e) collaborative institutional culture; (f) learning centered policies and procedures; (g) student engagement; (h) valued and well-trained staff; (i) effective partnerships; (j) intelligent use of technology and finally; (k)emphasis on quality. Table 5 provides a detailed overview of Culp's eleven factors.

Table 5.
Culp's Eleven Factors

Supportive Leadership	President understands critical role of SA; SSAO has same status as senior academic officer; Climate values SA programs and services; SSAO has strong background in SA theory and research, is well respected by college community, able to shape institutional culture and policies, and able to compete effectively for resources; SSAO should have well-developed communication skills and ability to gather, analyze data, and a change agent; SSAO should have personal and professional courage and intelligent management style
Mission-Driven Organizational Structure	Organizational structure reflects the college's mission and affirms role SA has in achieving mission; Intentionally create structure where SA and AA works together SSAO has vital role in planning, programming, space allocation, and budget deliberation and opportunity to help shape the culture of institution
Data-Based Culture	Create expectations that all divisions will build cultures of evidence that demonstrate how programs and services matter to the institutions mission; All areas should have clear definitions and expectations; Leaders must actively assist individuals in departments in asking the right questions, measuring what matters, building cultures of evidence, and sharing data with the college community.
Adequate Resources	Establish culture of evidence to create opportunity to compete for resource allocation; Distribute existing resources in manner that maximizes benefits to institution and proves decisions are based on data; Strengthen programs by competing for grants, discretionary funds, and donations; Create college culture that rewards the SA division when programs produce results
Collaborative Institutional Culture	How the division is viewed by the college community matters; Important to build collaboration with all divisions
Learning-Centered Policies and Procedure	It is essential to implement consistent policies and procedures that support learning and student success; SA leaders must help collect and analyze data about the effectiveness of all policies and procedures, retain those that help students succeed, and eliminate those that put students at risk
Student Engagement	Programs and services that invite—even force—students to connect with faculty, staff, one another, and academic subject matter are important. Institutions that value student success will seize every opportunity to engage students, both in and out of the classroom, from the day they apply until the day they reach their educational and career goals
Valued and Well-Trained Staff	SA staff members must feel valued and well prepared to do their jobs. Provide up-to-date job descriptions, adequate orientation to student affairs theory and to their position, clear information about important issues (such as the institution's mission, philosophy, goals, and major challenges), & opportunities to shape significant decisions. Access to mentoring and professional development activities, fair evaluation and recognition systems, and time for reflection.
Effective Partnerships	Effective partnerships help to increase retention and graduation rates. Institutional researchers collaborate with their colleagues in student affairs divisions to build cultures of evidence, the resulting information improves decision making across the college
Intelligent Use of Technology	Information technology has the power to transform education; Powerful tool that can reengineer processes, encourage academic and student affairs partnerships, and reward applications that transform learning, support services, and day-to-day operations.
Emphasis on Quality	Clearly, quality—quality experiences, quality people, and quality results—matters. Effective programs emerge in institutions that know who they are and communicate this knowledge in a clear and unambiguous manner to students, faculty members, student affairs practitioners, staff, and the community.

The concept of organizational theory was first established in the early 1900's, and since that time, has evolved and provided significant contributions to the field of higher education. Le William R. Scott, Professor at Stanford University (2003), asserts that the open system theory was first developed by Biologist, Ludwig von Bertanlanffy, who defined the concept of a system, as "all systems are characterized by an assemblage or combination of parts whose relations make them interdependent" (p. 77). Contingency Theory recognizes that organizational systems are inter-related with their environment and that different environments require different organizational relationships for effective working of the organization; finally, organizational structures should effectively meet the mission and strategic goals of the organization (Galbraith, 2002). Both theories are relevant to this study, but more specifically, even more relevant to the division of student affairs, as the division is not only interdependent but also inter-related to the institution as a whole. Additionally, a myriad of organizational structures are prevalent across institutions.

Traditionally, organizations within the business realm were viewed as closed systems that operated independently of its environment. It wasn't until the 1960's, that a more holistic view emerged and the concept of an open system began to take shape and the environment was recognized as a critical component in the operation of the organization (Scott, 2003). The open system theory makes the assumption that organizations (colleges) are comprised of multiple subsystems (student affairs), each of which receives inputs (resources, people) as well as outputs (functions, programs) from one another to make the organization operate effectively. Daniel Katz and Robert Kahn (1980), Professors at Princeton University developed a framework for open-systems that focused on the relationship between a system and its environment as well as what goes on within the system. The framework has the following components: (a) inputs into the organization; (b) the transformation of those inputs within the organization; (c) output; and; (d) recycling.

Katz and Kahn (1980) also identified ten characteristics of Open Systems theory:

1. Importation of energy from the environment (resources, people, etc.).
2. Throughput (transform resources available to them).
3. Output (export some resources to the environment).
4. Systems as cycles of events.
5. Negative entropy (system continues to thrive through continuous input of energy/resources).
6. Information input, negative feedback, and a coding process (to maintain steady state).
7. The steady state and dynamic homeostasis (and a tendency toward growth to ensure survival – must have balance between subsystems).
8. Differentiation and specialization.
9. Integration and coordination.
10. Equifinality - many paths to same end (p. 23-30).

The Contingency Theory asserts there is not one best way of organizing and that an organizational style that is effective in some situations may not be successful in others. “In other words: The optimal organization style is contingent upon various internal and external constraints” (Fiedler, 1964). These constraints may include the following: (a) organizational size; (b) differences in resources and services offered; (c) strategies and; (d) use of technology, etc. Four important ideas relevant to Contingency Theory include:

1. There is no universal or one best way to manage
2. The design of an organization and its subsystems must 'fit' with the environment
3. Effective organizations not only have a proper 'fit' with the environment but also between its subsystems
4. The needs of an organization are better satisfied when it is properly designed and the management style is appropriate both to the tasks undertaken and the nature of the work group. (Fiedler 1964; 12Manage, 2010).

The organizational structure of student affairs will be explored by examining the organization's hierarchical reporting levels, design models, and functional divisions within the for-profit post-secondary and public community college sector to yield the core dynamics that are most critical in supporting student success. The concept and theories used to frame the study include aspects of Margaret Culp's eleven factors that support student success and the Open Systems and Contingency Theory.

Conclusion

Public Community Colleges and For-Profit Post Secondary Institutions both have a rich complex history within the realm of higher education. Both institutions have experienced rapid growth, challenges, and strengths and have always tried to be responsive to the community and constituents for which it serves.

As Institutions of Higher Learning forge ahead to meet President Obama's challenge to the nation and respond to the proposed federal regulations, a re-evaluation of how it defines and contributes to its student's success must transpire. No longer can each institution just look at the rate of degrees conferred to measure its success. Indeed, the measurement of success must now also include the number of jobs obtained as well as the salary range of those placed in employment. What does this mean for the community college, for the for-profit post secondary institutions? Undoubtedly, the PCC's and FPPSI's will have to increase the number of students completing programs; provide more intrusive financial counseling; and establish stronger partnerships with potential employers, to ensure that its students are gaining meaningful employment.

Educating the nation will be the role of the public community college as well as the for-profit post secondary institution. In order to continue to compete globally and to once again become the leading nation in education, both institutions may benefit by exploring best practices and identifying an organizational structure and design model that allows for the infusion of optimal business within student affairs processes while maintaining academic integrity and staying true to the profession's initial mission, helping students to succeed.

The next chapter will explain the components of the mixed-method approach, the data collection procedures, as well as the participation and site selection criteria that were employed for this study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the roles, functions, and organizational structure of student affairs within public community colleges and for-profit post secondary institutions to identify the core dynamics that contribute most to student success. The results of the study will add to the body of knowledge on student affairs organizational structure and best practice. More importantly, it will address two gaps in literature: (a) a lack of formal studies comparing student affairs organizational structure and functions between for-profit post-secondary institutions and public community colleges and; (b) the availability of an organizational model that infuses business practices with academic practices to produce optimal outcomes.

The following research questions will be used to guide this mixed-method study:

1. Is there a difference in the success rate of students enrolled in PCC's when compared to the success rate of students enrolled in FPPSI's?
2. What differences exist in the types of Student Affairs services offered at the PCC's when compared to FPPSI's?
3. Is there a significant difference in the number of services provided by the Office of student affairs service at the institutions with higher completion rates as compared to institutions with lower completion rates?

4. What is the organizational structure of student affairs at PCC's and FPPSI's?
5. How do Executive Officers within the PCC and FPPSI determine which services best support student success at their institution?

The first section of the chapter will detail the components of the mixed-method approach and how it is best suited for this study. The next section will address the data collection procedures followed by participant and site selection criteria; descriptions of instruments used; data analysis; limitations, and finally; the researchers' personal experience in relation to the study.

Mixed-Method Research

The use of a mixed-method study allows for deeper meaning and girth of a subject and also helps to alleviate biases that may be present in a single study. This type of design involves procedures in which the "researcher converges or merges quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the research problem. The design requires that "the investigator collects both forms of data at the same time and then integrates the information in the interpretation of the overall results" (Creswell, 2007, p. 15). In contrast, quantitative research is conducted through a narrow lens using controlled experiments and testing hypothesis; while qualitative research involves a wide lens and seeks to understand a phenomenon (Johnson and Christensen, 2004). Although both types of studies can be rigorous, valid, and trustworthy when done independently, Creswell (2007) asserts that "to include only qualitative or quantitative methods [in a study] falls short of the major approaches being used today in social and human sciences" (p.4). The utilization of the mixed-method design will allow the data to be expressed numerically within the quantitative paradigm but also interpreted within the qualitative paradigm, allowing for a more in depth rigorous study.

The mixed-method approach has been in existence for more than forty years; first being introduced in 1959 by Campbell and Fisk who conducted a study on the validity of psychological traits. Since that time, there has been a wealth of mixed method studies conducted by various researchers contributing to significant growth and wide-spread acceptance of the design. Today, many researchers support the mixed method approach and identify it as the third research paradigm, especially in the social sciences and education discipline (Creswell, 2003; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003).

Further justification for the mixed method design is provided by Johnson (2007) and Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) who have identified several areas in which the mixed-method approach exceeds a single design approach:

1. Numbers can be used to add precision to words, pictures, and narrative.
2. Provides the strength of quantitative and qualitative research.
3. Can answer a broader and more complete range of research questions.
4. Can add insight and understanding that might be missed with a single design approach.
5. Increases the generalizability of the results.
6. Used together, it produces more complete knowledge necessary to inform theory and practice.

Additionally, Greene, Caracelli, and Graham (1989) and (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) identified five major purposes and rationales for conducting mixed method research:

1. Triangulation – seeks convergence and corroboration from different methods studying the same phenomenon.
2. Complementarities – seeks clarification, elaboration, and illustration of the results of one method with the results of another method.
3. Development – seeks to use the results from one method to help inform or shape the other method.
4. Initiation – seeks the discovery of paradox and contradiction, new perspectives of frameworks, stimulates new research questions or challenges obtained through one method.
5. Expansion – Seeks to extend the breadth and range of inquiry by using different methods for different inquiry components.

Johnson (2007) classifies mixed method research designs into two major dimensions: a) Time Order, concurrent versus sequential and; b) Paradigm Emphasis, equal status versus dominant status. The first dimension, Time Order, focuses on the timeframe in which the qualitative and quantitative data will be collected, either in a sequential or concurrent manner. The second dimension, Paradigm Emphasis, underscores whether the paradigms will be handled equivalently or if one will be more dominant than the other. For the purpose of this study, the sequential and equal status dimensions were selected to provide greater depth and understanding of the organizational structure of student affairs.

The mixed method design is appropriate for this study because data analysis from the qualitative phase cannot completely expose the true relationship between student affairs and student success at the public community college and for-profit post-secondary sector; nor can one design independently answer the research questions posed within the study. Further investigation through case study will allow for deeper analysis and understanding of this phenomenon and will also help alleviate biases that may be present if a single study was conducted. Combining quantitative and qualitative methods allows for the triangulation of data which adds rigor, richness, and depth to the research study.

Quantitative Approach

Quantitative research relies on the collection of numerical data and involves a narrow lens while studying behavior under controlled conditions (Johnson and Christensen, 2004; Merriam, 1998). Johnson and Christensen (2004) define Correlation Research as, "a form of non-experimental research in which the primary independent variable of interest is a quantitative variable" (p. 41). They further state that non-experimental research takes one of three forms: (a) descriptive research defined as, "research focused on providing an accurate description or picture of the status or characteristics of a situation or phenomenon; (b) predictive research, focused on predicting the future status of one or more dependent variables based one or more independent variables and; (c) explanatory, testing hypotheses and theories that explain how and why a phenomenon operates as it does (p. 347). Because the researcher is seeking to examine the organizational structure and the relationship between the number of service areas within student affairs and completion rates, the method chosen for this non-experimental research study is descriptive research.

Qualitative Approach

Qualitative research involves a wide angle lens and seeks to understand subjective dimensions of a phenomenon (Johnson and Christensen, 2004). Further distinction between the two paradigms has been identified by Merriam (1998) who states, “in contrast to quantitative research, qualitative research examines the various components of a phenomenon to reveal how all the components work together to form the whole phenomenon (p. 6). Qualitative research will not typically collect data in the form of numbers, but instead will conduct recorded observation and make interpretations from the observation (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). Merriam (2002) further argues, “If you want to understand a phenomenon, uncover the meaning a situation has for those involved, or delineate process (how things happen), then a qualitative design would be most appropriate” (p. 11). Denzin & Lincoln (2005) define qualitative research as:

> A field of inquiry in its own right. It cuts across disciplines, subfields, and subject matter. A complex, interconnected family of terms, concepts, and assumptions surrounds the qualitative research orientation. These include the traditions associated with positivism, post structuralism, and the many qualitative research perspectives or methods connected to cultural and interpretive studies (p. 98).

Consequently, the qualitative interpretive paradigm is being selected for the qualitative phase of the study as it will (a) explore the organizational structure and role of student affairs, (b) examine the functions of student affairs; (c) provide comprehensive insight as to how the Senior Students Student Affairs Officer (SSAO) evaluates and determines which services best support student success.

Qualitative research assists in understanding the meaning individuals attribute to a social or human problem. "To study this problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes" (Creswell, 2007, p. 36). Qualitative inquiry seeks to create a holistic understanding of the phenomenon being studied and this discovery should be conducted in a natural setting because people "take meaning from their contexts as they do from themselves" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Qualitative research is being conducted to accumulate a holistic depiction of student affairs within its natural setting for both the community college and for profit post secondary institutions.

Willis (2007) states, "The goal of interpretive research is an understanding of a particular situation or context much more than the discovery universal laws or rules" (p.99).To allow further interpretation and transferability of the data to occur, the researcher is focused on collecting and analyzing rich data that will be relevant and useful in the realm of higher education.

Case Study

Biography or narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, historical, and case study are common approaches used in qualitative research (Creswell, 2007; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 2002). While each type has similar elements, resulting in each falling under the auspice of the qualitative paradigm, they each have a different focus. This different focus attributes to variations in "how the research questions might be asked, sample selection, data collection, analysis, and write up" (Merriam, 2002, p. 6). Additionally, Yin (2003) provides factors that should be considered when selecting a research method which consists of: (a) type of questions being asked; (b) the control the researcher has over events; and (c) the degree on contemporary focus versus historical events. Table 6 was adapted from Creswell's (2007) overview of qualitative approaches.

Table 6.
Approaches of Qualitative Research

Type of research	Narrative	Phenomenology	Grounded Theory	Ethnography	Case Study
	Exploring life of an individual	Understanding essence of the experience	Developing a theory grounded in data from the field	Describing and interpreting a culture-sharing group	Developing an in-depth description and analysis of a case or multiple cases
Type of problem best suited approach	Needing to tell stories of individual experiences	Needing to describe the essence of a lived phenomenon	Grounding a theory in the view of participants	Describing and interpreting the shared patterns of culture of a group	Providing an in-depth understanding of a case or cases

The case study is differentiated from the other forms of qualitative methods because it provides an intensive description and analysis of a phenomenon; allows the researcher to gather multiple sources of information to provide an in-depth picture; allows for rich descriptions of bounded systems (Creswell, 2007; Merriam,1998).To acquire a true and accurate depiction of student affairs (a bounded system), the study must occur in a natural setting, thus, the case study was deemed to be the best approach for the qualitative phase of the study. Additionally, the type of questions guiding the study ("how" and "what") warrant the study be placed within the realm of a case study methodology.

Creswell (2007) interposes that multiple case studies provide opportunity to compare themes and variables to garner insight into an issue. Because the study is designed to compare and contrast the differences of student affairs within six different institutions, the multiple case study method will be used to show different perceptions on the same issue allowing for detailed data rich descriptors of the multiple bounded systems in the study (Creswell, 2007; Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Merriam, 2002).

Selection Criteria

Institutional Selection

The Public Community Colleges and For-Profit Post Secondary Institutions that will be used for the study were identified and selected from The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) database based upon the following criteria: (a) Geographic Location (b) Control of Institution, a classification of whether an institution is operated by publicly elected or appointed officials (public control) or by privately elected or appointed officials and derives its major source of funds from private sources, and (c) Sector of Institution, one of nine institutional categories resulting from dividing the universe according to control and level. Control categories are public, private not-for-profit, and private for-profit. Level categories are 4-year and higher (4 year), 2-but-less-than 4-year (2 year), and less than 2-year, according to the 2008-2009 academic school year, and (d) degree granting.

The first criterion, Geographic Location by state code, was used to identify all post-secondary institutions within the State of Illinois. The State of Illinois was selected because of convenience but also because of its rich history of community colleges; the diverse population it serves; and the broad number of institutions that exists within the state. This criteria used alone generated a list of more than 280 institutions. Because the study was focused on comparing the for-profit sector to the public sector and not concerned with investigating four-year institutions, additional factors were needed to isolate two-year institutions from the list.

The next criterion, Sector of Institution, which defines the level of the institution (two-year, four-year, or two but less than four-year) and Control of the institution was selected to further distinguish the institutions to be used in the study. Control of Institution is defined as, "A classification of whether an institution is operated by publicly elected or appointed officials or by privately elected or appointed officials and derives its major source of funds from private sources" (IPEDS, 2009). The two Institutional Control variables selected include: a) Public, 2-year and b) Private for- profit, 2 year.

The third and final criterion, Degree Granting, associate degree, was selected to ensure that there was consistency amongst the institutions in regards to degree attainment for its students. The four criterions, State Code, Sector of Institution, Control of Institution, and Degree Granting, used collectively, including differentiation of schools using federal funding, generated a total population of 68 institutions representing both sectors within the State of Illinois.

Participant Selection

Purposeful sampling entails the researcher establishing attributes of the population and then selects participants who possess the attributes (Johnson and Christensen, 2004). Because the research will identify differences as well as similarities that exist within the division of student affairs in two distinct sectors: public two-year community colleges and for-profit two year institutions, purposeful sampling was utilized to select the participants in the study. Merriam (2001) posits that purposeful sampling is the preferred method for most qualitative research and asserts it is, "based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, gain insight, and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned" (p. 61).

Purposeful sampling was used to select the participants for the semi-structured interview which consisted of three Senior Student Affairs Officers (SSAO) from the public community college sector and three SSAO's from the for-profit post secondary sector. Senior Student Affairs Officers were selected because of their first-hand knowledge managing the division and experience working directly with students.

Data Collection

Data collection for the study was conducted sequentially. Graphical representation of a mixed method design allows a researcher to visualize the data collection sequence, priority of method, and how to connect the two approaches within one study, (Creswell, Ivankova, Stick, 2006). Figure 3 represents the sequential equal-dimension mixed-method model chosen for the study.

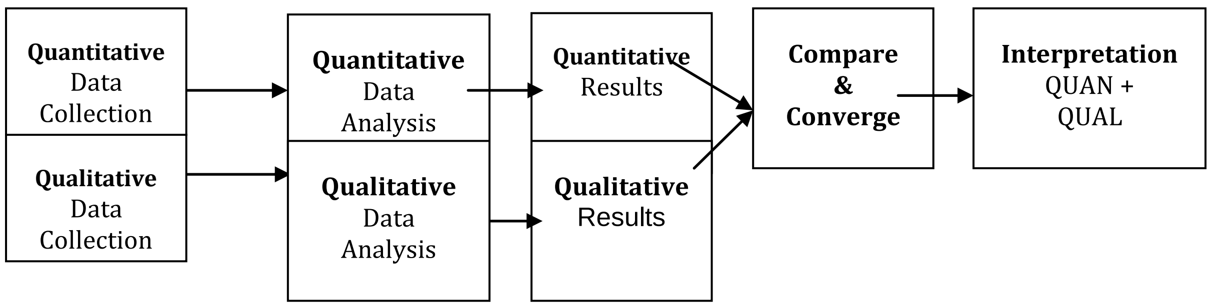


Figure 2. Diagram of Sequential Mixed-Method Model.
Provides a visual depiction of the steps utilized in a sequential mixed method approach. Modified from (Creswell, 2003).

Quantitative Data Collection

Data collection for the quantitative portion of the study consists of survey research, utilization of the Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and institutional websites to collect institutional data. The following research guiding questions were used for the quantitative phase of the study:

1. Is there a difference in the success rate of students enrolled in PCC's when compared to the success rate of students enrolled in FPPSI's?
2. What differences exist in the types of student affairs services offered at the PCC's when compared to FPPSI's?
3. Is there a difference in the amount of services provided by Student Affairs at the institutions with higher completion rates as compared to institutions with lower completion rates?

Gay and Colleagues (2009), asserts that a representative sample is needed to ensure a valid representation of the group under investigation. To ensure the sample size is valid, Gay and Colleagues offer the following guideline, as illustrated in Table 7, for selecting a sampling size.

Table 7.
Guideline for Sample Size

Approximate Size of Population	Sample Size
N=100 or <	Survey entire population
N=500	50%
N=1500	20%
N=>5000	400 adequate

Because the sample size was less than 100, the online survey (Appendix C) was sent via electronic mail to the Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO) at all 68 institutions with an invitation to participate in the qualitative phase of the study. The second part of the quantitative data collection consisted of the researcher gathering institutional data on all sixty-eight institutions through the Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System (IPEDS) in combination with data from each individual institutional website. The table below provides a visual depiction of the quantitative data collection phase and response rate.

Table 8. *Quantitative Participation of Institutions*

68 Institutions	Demographic Survey	Institutional Data
Response Rate	35.3% (n = 24)	100% (n=68)

Employing descriptive statistics, the completion rate, retention rate, default rate, differences in function, technology, and organizational structure and model designs for the PCC sector and FPPSI sector will be compared through the use of charts and graphs. Descriptive narrative will be provided in the data analysis section.

Qualitative Data Collection

Creswell (2007) contends that multiple case studies garner more insight into an issue by providing an opportunity to compare themes and variables. Because the study investigated the roles and functions of student affairs within PCC's and FPPSI's, the multiple case study method was used to show different perceptions on the same issue allowing for detailed data rich descriptors of the multiple bounded systems in the study (Creswell, 2007; Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Merriam, 2002). The following guiding questions were used for the qualitative phase of the study:

1. What is the organizational structure of student affairs at PCC's and FPPSI's?
2. How do Executive Officers within the PCC and FPPSI determine which services best support student success at their institution?

The data collection for the qualitative phase consisted of semi-structure interviews, a demographic survey, and institutional document review. Merriam (2005) contends that semi-structured interviews allow for duplicate information to be gathered during the interview process but also provides flexibility to gage different viewpoints of the interviewees. In other words, this type of interview allows the researcher to ask additional questions other than those that were pre-determined. The demographic survey and consent form was provided to each participant prior to the scheduled interview. Each interview was between 40-60 minutes during which time observational and reflective field notes were taken to add to the richness of the interview. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and checked for accuracy as a means to protect the interviewee and to ensure harm did not exist for the interviewee or the institution under study.

The institutional document review consisted of available information on the institutions website, catalogs, and other publications. The data obtained includes institutional information: assigned departments within the division of student affairs; services provided; and the administrative structure of student affairs at the respective institution.

Description of Instrument

There were two main instruments used for this study. The first instrument was a self-developed modified version of a questionnaire derived from a doctoral study "Student Perceptions of Student Services in Three Rural Colleges Community Colleges" by Dr. Jacqueline Herron Stennis (2004). The modified survey, Senior Student Affairs Officer Survey (Appendix D), sought to address the factors identified by Margaret Culp (2003). Culp asserts that there are eleven critical factors that assist Senior Student Affairs Executive Officers (SSAO) in creating and sustaining services that truly support the success of its students. The second instrument used was a self-developed form by the researcher, Institutional Data Collection Form (Appendix D) that helped the researcher organize and collect data on all sixty-eight of the institutions used in the study. The interview protocol being developed for the study has been designed to collect data to address research questions five and six, which guided the qualitative phase of the study.

Limitations of the Study

This study sought to explore the varying organizational structures and design models that exist within two sectors: the for-profit post-secondary institutions and public community college sector to identify the core dynamics that support student success. Furthermore, the researcher sought to examine if there were significant differences in the success rate of students enrolled in PCC's when compared to the success rate of students enrolled in FPPSI's, and to determine if there is a significant difference in the number of services provided by the Office of Student Affairs service at the institutions with higher completion rates as compared to institutions with lower completion rates.

Creswell (2007) states, "limitations identify potential weaknesses in the study" (p. 148). As with all research study conducted, this study also had limitations that were beyond the control of the researcher. One limit of the study was that because of time constraints and convenience of the researcher, only institutions within the State of Illinois were selected, thus, the study only represents a small percentage of the sectors in existence nationally. Another limitation was the use of surveys and interviews. Because the surveys only had a 34% return rate, the study cannot account for those who did not respond and as a result, the richness that could have been added by their responses is not included in the research findings.

Data Analysis

For this sequential equal-dimension mixed-method study, coding and descriptive statistics will be used to analyze the data. The data analysis of the study utilized a conceptual framework consisting of Open Systems theory, Contingency Theory, and selected concepts from Margaret Culp's Eleven Factors of Student Affairs. The intrinsic suggestions of the two theories and Culp's concept: effectiveness of organizational structure and design, emphasis on functions, decision-making, student success indicators, and effective use of technology resources for optimal performance by the institutions, served as the guiding analytical strategy and helped to identify patterns and themes for the data.

Quantitative data analysis occurred by first coding the data and then using cross tabulation and frequency tables to analyze the demographic information and participant's answers to the survey. Finally, descriptive statistics was reported in narrative form within the study as well as through the creation of charts and graphs to report the differences in retention rates, completion rates, job placement rates, default rates, differences in services, and functions within the various institutions identified for the study.

Creswell (2007) suggests that, "qualitative data analysis should be inductive and establish patterns and themes" (p. 36). Once the data collection phase was complete, a holistic analysis of the entire case was completed to identify recurring themes and patterns. Recorded interviews were transcribed in a confidential manner to guarantee an audit trail existed.

Concurrent triangulation is used to "confirm, cross-validate, or corroborate findings in a single study" (Creswell, 2003, p. 217). Themes and codes identified through the qualitative data were poised with findings from the statistical analysis and descriptive statistics in the quantitative phase to establish relationships and to triangulate the study. Table 9 provides an overview of the features of this study.

Table 9.
Research Overview

Characteristics	Quantitative Phase	Qualitative Phase
Research question(s)	Is there a difference in the success rate of students enrolled in PCC's when compared to the success rate of students enrolled in FPPSI's? What differences exist in the types of Student Affairs services offered at the PCC's when compared to FPPSI's? Is there a significant difference in the number of services provided by the student affairs at institutions with higher completion rates as compared to institutions with lower completion rates?	What is the organizational structure of student affairs at PCC's and FPPSI's? How do Executive Officers within the PCC and FPPSI determine which services best support student success at their institution?
Population & sample	PCC's & FPPSI's N=68	SSAO's N=6
Data collection	Surveys and Institutional Data	Interviews, Documents, & Field Notes
Instrument	SSAO Survey Institutional Data Collection Form	Interview Protocol
Data analysis	Descriptive Stats	Themes and coding Cross-Case Analysis

Integration of Data

Integration of the quantitative and qualitative methods will transpire in the data collection and data analysis phases of the study. The demographic survey, Student Affairs Questionnaire, and document review was collected, coded, and scored. During the analysis phase, data was compared using descriptive statistical analysis, as well as identification of patterns and themes. In the interpretation phase, results from the entire study was aggregated, yielding a convergence of the data that produced a more vigorous and exhaustive study.

Ethical Considerations

All research that involves human subjects must take into account pertinent guidelines to ensure the study is ethical; informed consent of the participants, guarantee of protection from harm, protection of privacy, void of deception, and voluntary involvement by all participants throughout every phase of the study (Bogdan and Biklen (2000); Merriam (1998). Johnson and Christensen (2004) further reiterated that assurance of ethical acceptability of the study to mean:

1. You have to get the informed consent of the participant.
2. Any deception must be justified by the study's scientific, educational, or applied value.
3. The research participant must know that they are free to withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice.
4. The research participants are protected from physical and mental discomfort, harm, and danger that may arise from the research procedures.
5. The confidentiality or anonymity of the participants and the data must be protected.

To ensure the ethical integrity of the study, all of the participants in a study signed a consent form indicating the scope of the study, that it was voluntary and participation could be withdrawn at any time. Furthermore, all steps have been taken to ensure that all participants and corresponding institutions remain anonymous. All records, including interview transcripts, documents collected and researcher notes will be securely stored for a minimum of five years.

Trustworthiness and Reliability

For a qualitative study to be deemed trustworthy, Lincoln and Guba (1985) assert that it must contain the following four elements: (a) credibility, does the research findings represent a "credible" conceptual interpretation of the data drawn from the original data; (b) transferability, the degree to which the findings can apply or transfer; (c) dependability, quality of the data collected and analysis and finally; (d) conformability, measures how well the inquiry's findings supports the data collected. Because the study utilized a mixed method design, the researcher ensured certain steps were implemented to ensure the reliability of the qualitative phase of the study.

To further strengthen and increase trustworthiness of the study, a pilot study was conducted with two Student Affairs Executive Officers to review the interview questions and survey. Participants for the pilot included executive officers from The City Colleges of Chicago. Additionally, during the interview process, the researcher restated and often clarified statements with the participants to ensure accuracy of data being collected. The second factor, credibility, was assured through triangulation of data, using multiple sources of data to reinforce emerging themes.

One threat to validity is researcher bias, obtaining results consistent with what the researcher wants to find and several strategies have been identified to assist the researcher in discovering biases, (Johnson and Christensen, 2004). The researcher used Reflexivity, self-reflection by the researcher on his or her biases and predisposition, in conjunction with triangulation and verification of data collected to ensure the validity of the study.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher is critical in regards to validity and credibility in qualitative research. It is the role of the researcher to interpret data and reach logical conclusions. Leedy and Ormrod (2007) contend before embarking on research study, an effective researcher will typically look at research studies related to their interests. They state, “The human mind is undoubtedly the most important tool on the researcher’s workbench. Its functioning dwarfs all other gadgetry. Nothing equals its powers of comprehension, integrative reasoning, and insight” (p. 31). Miles and Huberman (1994) further define the characteristics of a good qualitative researcher as one that should have:

1. Some familiarity with the phenomenon and the setting under study.
2. Strong conceptual interests.
3. A multidisciplinary approach, as opposed to a narrow grounding or focus in a single discipline.
4. Good "investigative” skills, including doggedness, the ability to draw people out, and the ability to ward off premature closure (p. 38).

The researcher is aware that pre-existed biases are present as she has worked for the public community college sector for over fourteen years. However, every precaution has been taken to ensure that these biases did not guide the study nor affect the outcome of the findings.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS & CROSS CASE ANALYSIS

Introduction

This doctoral study investigated the roles, functions, and organizational structure of Student Affairs within Public Community Colleges (PCC's) and For-Profit Post Secondary Institutions (FPPSI's) to identify core dynamics that contribute most to student success. Margaret Culp (1993) identified several key factors that assist the Senior Student Affair Officer (SSAO) in creating and sustaining functions that truly support the success of its students, supportive leadership, an organizational structure that affirms the role of student affairs, adequate student affairs resources, intelligent use of technology, and quality programs that force the student body to engage in campus programs and services.

This study employed a sequential equal dimension mixed method design utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data collection. The quantitative phase included the combination of demographic surveys in addition to collection of institutional statistics on all sixty-eight institutions who met the criteria for the study. The institutional data includes information for the 2009 academic year regarding reporting structure, student affairs functions, technology resources, completion rates, retention rates, job placement rates, and default rates for both sectors. The qualitative phase consisted of interviews with executive officers at three of the public community colleges and three of the for-profit post-secondary institutions.

Quantitative Phase: Survey Results

The demographic survey was designed to collect data on Illinois Community College and For-Profit sector related to the organizational structure and role of student affairs that existed within both institutional types. The survey was electronically disseminated to all sixty-eight institutions and had a response rate of 35.3% (n=24). The survey was designed to gather basic information on the role, function, and structure of student affairs. The acceptable and average response rate for online surveys is 30%, which allows for generalizations to be concluded relative to the responses provided (Hamilton, 2003; Punch, (2003). The first question of the survey provided optional identifying information of the respondent and results have been purposely omitted to preserve the anonymity of the respondent. The second question was used to ascertain the title of the person responsible for the executive oversight of student affairs. Despite the instrument targeting the senior student affairs officer, there were other administrators within the institution who actually completed the survey. Table 10 represents the variation in positions of professionals completing the surveys.

Table 10
Job Title

Title	Response Count	Percentage
Vice-President of Student Services	3	13%
Vice-President of Student Development	1	4%
Vice-President of Student Affairs	3	13%
Student Relations Manager	1	4%
Program Director of Student Services	1	4%
Educational Consultant	1	4%
Director of Student Life	1	4%
Director of Student Finance	1	4%
Dean, Student Services	4	17%
Associate Vice-President of Student Services	1	4%
Associate Vice-President of Student Development	1	4%
Associate Director	1	4%
No Response	5	21%
Total	24	100%

The third question of the survey identified the type of institution being represented by the respondent. The 68 institutions within the study were comprised of 48 PCC's (70.6%) and 20 FPPSI's (29.4%) collectively. Of the institutions responding, the majority of respondents indicated they were employed at a PCC, 62.5% (n=15), whereas 37.5% (n=9) represented the FPPSI. Question four of the survey collected more information on the gender of the executive officer of student affairs. This data was only used for demographic information and not used to analyze any relationships according to gender and its relevance to the structure or function of student affairs. The results of question four indicate that 25% (n=6) were male and 75% (n=18) of the executive officers were female.

Question five of the survey requested the educational level of respondent completing the survey. 50% (n=12) reported having obtained a Master's Degree, 20.83% (n=5) had a Doctorate Degree, 16.66% (n=4) were doctoral candidates, and 12.5% (n=4) reported bachelor's level as the highest degree. One of the respondents indicated it is very rare to hold the position of vice-president without a master's degree, but indicated prior experience was taken into account and that the masters degree is near completion.

Participants were also asked to identify the length of time they had been working in their current position. This question was posed to provide insight on the years of experience and expertise of the respondents in the management of the student affairs division. According to the responses provided 37.5% (n=9) indicated five or more years; 29.17% (n=7) reported three years; 16.67% (n=4) reported two years or four years respectively; and there was a 0% response rate for experience of one year or less.

One focus of the study was to explore the organizational structure of student affairs, specifically the reporting and executive cabinet structure that is currently in place at each institution. When asked if they were a part of the presidential cabinet, 54.2% (n=13) responded yes and 45.8% (n=11) responded no. To ascertain an understanding of the structure, participants were asked to identify who they reported to in their organization. Table 11 identifies the reporting unit by the respondents.

Table 11
Reporting Unit

Title	Response Count	Percentage
Assist VP of Academic & Student Affairs	1	4%
CAO/Provost	1	4%
CFO	1	4%
Dean of Students	2	8%
Director of Academic Advising	2	8%
Director of admission	1	4%
Director of Education/Campus President	1	4%
President	8	33%
CEO	2	8%
Provost	1	4%
Vice President	2	8%
No Response	2	8%
Total	24	100%

The next question identified if there was a mission statement specific for the division of student affairs. According to the data, 68.4% indicated there was a mission statement and 31.6% responded that a mission statement did not exist.

Another focus of the study was to determine the role and function of student affairs that existed at the various institutions. Not suprisingly, the most prominent function of services provided by each institution included admissions/registrars, advising, bursar's, and new student orientation. Table 12 portrays the services that are available at the various institutions and also distinguishes which ones are mandated or optional. Many of the institutions used the terms admissions and registrar's office, and advising and counseling interchangeably, which would account for the data not having a 100% rate for each of the institutions in these particular areas.

Table 12.

Available Services

Service	Yes, mandated	Yes, not mandated	Not Offered
Admissions Office	50.0% (12)	33.3% (8)	0.0%
Advising Services	79.2% (19)	20.8% (5)	0.0%
Athletic Program	8.3% (2)	62.5% (15)	29.2% (7)
Bursar's/Business Office	87.5% (21)	8.3% (2)	4.2% (1)
Campus Bookstore	58.3% (14)	33.3% (8)	8.3% (2)
Campus Social Activities	33.3% (8)	62.5% (15)	4.2% (1)
Career Planning	33.3% (8)	66.7% (15)	0.0%
Cultural Programs	16.7% (4)	75.0% (18)	8.3% (2)
Financial Aid	62.5% (15)	37.5% (9)	0.0%
First Year Experience Program	54.2% (13)	25.0% (6)	20.8% (5)
Intramural Sports	0.0%	41.7% (10)	58.3% (14)
Job Placement	20.8% (5)	58.3% (14)	20.8% (5)
Library Resources	45.8% (11)	50.0% (12)	4.2% (1)
New Student Orientation	75.0% (18)	25.0% (6)	0.0%
Online Support Services	58.3% (14)	33.3% (8)	8.3% (2)
Peer Mentors	16.7% (4)	62.5% (15)	20.8% (5)
Peer Tutors	29.2% (7)	62.5% (15)	8.3% (2)
Registrar's Office	54.2% (13)	37.5% (9)	0.0%
Student Center	37.5% (9)	33.3% (6)	29.2% (7)
Student Government	20.8% (5)	41.7% (10)	37.5% (9)
Student Success/Freshman Seminar	54.2% (13)	25.0% (6)	20.8% (5)
Tutoring Lab	33.3% (8)	58.3% (14)	8.3% (2)

Question 8 of the survey requested that the respondents identify, in order, the services that they felt were most critical in supporting student success. The following services were identified as most critical as a first choice response: academic advisement with a 74% (n=14), financial aid 11% (n=2), and admissions, emergency crisis intervention, and orientation, each had a response rate of 5% (n=1) as the third choice. The following services were identified as most critical as a second choice response: financial aid 42% (n=8); advising with 16% (n=3), and career planning, with a response rate of 11% (n=2).

The third choice included tutoring with a response rate of 21% (n=4), followed by new student orientation, online support services, personal counseling, and career coaching, all with a response rate of 11% (n=2). Appendix G provides a more detailed overview of responses for question eleven of the demographic survey.

Quantitative Phase: Institutional Descriptive Data

Institutional data was collected on the 68 institutions that met the selection criteria for the study: (a) Geographic location (b) Control of Institution, a classification of whether an institution is operated by publicly elected or appointed officials (public control) or by privately elected or appointed officials and derives its major source of funds from private sources, and (c) Sector of Institution, one of nine institutional categories resulting from dividing the universe according to control and level. Control categories are public, private not-for-profit, and private for-profit. Level categories are 4-year and higher (4 year), 2-but-less-than 4-year (2 year), and less than 2-year, according to the 2009 academic school year. Data was collected from the Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System (IPEDS), which gathers institutional data from surveys conducted on an annual basis by the U.S. Department's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). For the purpose of this study, data collected focused on the areas of completion rate, retention rate, and default rates, and job placement rates. Research Question 1 through 3 addressed the quantitative phase of the study:

1. Is there a difference in the success rate of students enrolled in PCC's when compared to the success rate of students enrolled in FPPSI's?

2. What differences exist in the types of student affairs services offered at the PCC's when compared to FPPSI's?
3. Is there a significant difference in the number of services provided by the Office of Student Affairs at the institutions with higher completion rates as compared to institutions with lower completion rates?

The data in this section will be presented for the public community college institutions followed by data presentation for the for-profit post-secondary sector institutions.

Completion Rates

Table 13 and Table 14 represent the completion rate reported by the public community and the for-profit postsecondary institutions, respectively. As indicated, the majority of the PCC's respondents reported a completion rate ranging between 21-30% (n=15, 31.3%); the next percentile included a range of 11-20% (n=12, 25%) and the third level included a range of 31-40% (n=10, 20.8%). The lowest range, 0-10% had a response rate of 16.7% (n=8) and the highest range was within the 71-80% range with a response rate of 2.1% (n=1). The majority of FPPSI's completion rate fell within the 31-40% (n=4) and 41-50% (n=4) percentile range, which was also the overall highest response. The next highest response level was 61-70% (n=3). The lowest response rate reported had a percentage rate of 2.6% (n=1) that fell within the 91-100% completion rate range. The FPPSI's did not report a completion rate below 20%.

Table 13.
Completion Rates PCC

	Response Rate	Percentage
0-10%	8	16.7%
11-20%	12	25.0%
21-30%	15	31.3%
31-40%	10	20.8%
41-50%	2	4.2%
51-60%	0	0.0%
61-70%	0	0.0%
71-80%	1	2.1%
81-90%	0	0.0%
91-100%	0	0.0%
No Response	0	0.0%
Total	48	100%

Table 14.
Completion Rates FPPSI

	Response Rate	Percentage
0-10%	0	0.0%
11-20%	0	0.0%
21-30%	2	11.1%
31-40%	4	22.2%
41-50%	4	22.2%
51-60%	2	11.1%
61-70%	3	16.7%
71-80%	0	0.0%
81-90%	2	11.1%
91-100%	1	5.6%
No Response	2	11.1%
Total	20	100%

Retention Rates

The next area under review included retention rates for each sector. The response rate for the PCC's, 37.5% (n=18), was also the highest overall completion rate for the sector, falling within the 61-70% range; the lowest completion range 31-40% had a response rate of 6.3% (n=3). The FPPSI's highest response rate 38.9% (n=7) fell between the range of 41-50%; the highest retention rate 81-90% had a response rate of 5.6% (n=1) and the lowest rate 21-30% also had a response rate of 5.6% (n=1). Interestingly, none of the FPPSI's reported a retention rate under 10%. Table 15 and Table 16 provide a visual depiction of the retention data collected for both sectors.

Table 15.
Retention Rates PCC

	Response Rate	Percentage
0-10%	0	0.0%
11-20%	0	0.0%
21-30%	0	0.0%
31-40%	3	6.3%
41-50%	11	22.9%
51-60%	16	33.3%
61-70%	18	37.5%
71-80%	0	0.0%
81-90%	0	0.0%
91-100%	0	0.0%
No Response	0	0.0%
Total	48	100%

Table 16.
Retention Rates FPPSI

	Response Rate	Percentage
0-10%	0	0.0%
11-20%	0	0.0%
21-30%	1	5.6%
31-40%	1	5.6%
41-50%	7	38.9%
51-60%	3	16.7%
61-70%	4	22.2%
71-80%	1	5.6%
81-90%	1	5.6%
91-100%	0	0.0%
No Response	2	11.1%
Total	20	100%

Job Placement Rates

The third area under review includes the job placement rates for both sectors. Information regarding the job placement rates for the public community college sector (PCC's) was accessed from the Post Secondary Perkins Online Data System (PODS) which is available on Illinois Community College Systems (ICCB) website. Data was collected for all forty-eight PCC's identified for the study. The majority of the responses 47.92% (n=23) was within the percentile range of 71-80%, and the smallest response rate, 6.25% (n= 3) spanned the 31-40% range. Regarding the for-profit post-secondary sector, job placement rates were encapsulated from 50% (n=10) the institution's websites. The preponderance of available responses 20% (n=4) ranged between 81-90%. The lowest response 5% (n=1) was within the 51-60% range. Table 17 and 18 represents the job placement data.

Table 17.
Job Placement Rates PCC's

	Response Rate	Percentage
0-10%	0	0%
11-20%	0	0%
21-30%	0	0%
31-40%	3	6.25%
41-50%	2	4.17%
51-60%	7	14.58%
61-70%	8	16.67%
71-80%	23	47.92%
81-90%	5	10.42%
91-100%	0	0%
No Response	0	0%
Total	48	100%

Table 18.
Job Placement Rates FPSSI's

	Response Rate	Percentage
0-10%	0	0%
11-20%	0	0%
21-30%	0	0%
31-40%	0	0%
41-50%	0	0%
51-60%	1	5%
61-70%	0	0%
71-80%	2	10%
81-90%	4	20%
91-100%	3	15%
No Response	10	40%
Total	20	100%

Default rate

The Obama administration has proposed fourteen regulations for institutions receiving Title IV funding, one of the regulations dealing directly with institutions who participate in the federal loan program. If the regulation is passed, there will be stiffer penalties assessed for institutions with high default rates in a three year consecutive period. This new regulation would require institutions to have more intrusive financial counseling for its students. This new directive would not only have a direct impact on the for-profit post-secondary institutions but it would also impact the public community colleges as it would mean providing more intrusive financial planning services with students in addition to ensuring that program are being offered that will lead to gainful employment so that students are in a position to pay their student loans once they complete the programs at the various institutions. The new regulations would also mean that stronger relationships would have to be established with external companies and that job placement services are strengthened at both types of sectors. Table 19 and Table 20 represent the default rate for both institutions for the years 2005-2007.

Table 19.
Default rate for PCC's

Academic Year	Response Rate
2007	
0%	6
5% - 10%	14
11% - 15%	**21**
16% - 20%	5
20% or more	1
2006	
0%	7
5% - 10%	**18**
11% - 15%	16
16% - 20%	5
20% or more	1
2005	
0%	6
5% - 10%	**27**
11% - 15%	11
16% - 20%	2
20% or more	1

Table 20.
Default rate for FPPSI

Academic Year	Response Rate
2007	
0%	0
5% - 10%	7
11% - 15%	**8**
16% - 20%	3
20% or more	1
2006	
0%	1
5% - 10%	**12**
11% - 15%	3
16% - 20%	3
20% or more	1
2005	
0%	1
5% - 10%	**11**
11% - 15%	4
16% - 20%	3
20% or more	0

Services

In terms of services offered, the public community college sector typically offered six to fourteen different services within the division of Student Affairs and did not integrate technology in all of its services. The for-profit sector typically offered a range of three to eight services through the division and had advanced utilization of technology within its services.

Technology

For the purpose of this study, the factors used to determine technology resource levels included the institutions capacity to offer the following: a) social media; b) e-advising services, c) online instant chat and; d) online student resolution.

Social Media.

The first area examined was the institutions capacity for social media, providing communication through the use of online blogs, social network sites, and podcasts. The public community college's had a response rate of 64.58% (n=31) offering social media as compared to a rate of 35.42% (n=17) not offering the services. The types of social media offered include the following: Facebook 56.25% (N=27), MySpace 4.17% (n=2), Youtube 18.75% (n= 9), RSS Feeds 14.58% (n=7), Twitter 39.58% (n=19), and other media utilized 6.25% (n=3). The for-profit post-secondary sector report that 75% (n=15) of its institution offers social media as compared to 25% (n=5) not offering the service. Social Media included the following: Facebook 70% (n=14), MySpace 10% (n=2), RSS Feeds 5% (n=1), Youtube 35% (n=7), and other media 30% (n=6).

E-Advising Services.

The next area examined included E-advising services, online version of advising which allows students to learn about general academic requirements, campus resources, and answers to frequently asked questions. 20.83% (n=10) of the PCC sector provided E-advising, compared to 79.2% (n=38) not providing the service. In regards to the FPPSI sector, 70% (n=13) offered the service compared to 25% (n=5) not offering, and 5% (n=1) of the institutions did not have the data available.

Instant Chat.

The third area explored was the institutions ability to provide live chat, online instant communication with a campus representative to address general questions, concerns or comments. This service may be available twenty four hours a day or only during normal operating business hours. The public community college sector indicated that 4.17% (n=2) offered instant chat and 95.83% (n=46) did not provide the service. The for-profit post-secondary institutions data showed that 45% (n=9) offered instant chat, compared to 55% (n=11) not offering the services.

Online Student Resolution.

The final service reviewed for the area of technology was online student resolution, services that allowed students to resolve any issues online through email communication or live chat with a campus representative. The PCC's reported 4.3% (n=2) providing services compared to 91.67% (n=46) not offering online student resolution. The FPPSI's data reveals that 45% (n=9) offered online student resolution and 55% (n=11) did not offer the service.

Qualitative Phase

The qualitative phase of the study, which consisted of a semi-structured interview with the Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO) or designee at three Illinois public community colleges and three for-profit post-secondary institutions. The data collected garnered a deeper understanding of the organizational structure and role of student affairs within both sectors. Participants were selected from the pool of respondents who first expressed an interest in interviewing via the demographic survey that was sent to all sixty-eight institutions at the initial phase of of the data collection. According to the data provided, the titles ranged from vice-president to directors, and the length of services ranged from two to five years. Table 21 provides a visual depiction of institutional type, the participant's title, and years of experience provided by each interviewee.

Table 21.
Interview Particpants

Participant	Title	Years of Experience
PCC1	Associate Vice-President	2
PCC 2	Vice-President	3
PCC 3	Dean	5
FPPSI 1	Associate Director	2
FPPSI 2	Director	2
FPPSI 3	Manager	4

The next section provides an overview of the research questions posed and the answers provided by all six institutions. The interview questions posed to the SSAO for the qualitative phase of the study include the following:

Q1. What is the organizational structure of your institution; of the department? Do you sit on the presidential cabinet?

Q2. What services does your department currently provide to students? Which services are utilized the most and how often? Which services are mandated or strongly encouraged?

Q3. How and in what ways do you determine which services best support your student's success?

Q4. How does your institution define and track student success?

Q5. What do you feel is the biggest barrier for your department in regards to the services it provides to students?

Q6. What do you feel is the biggest barrier for your student blocking their overall success? What is your department's response to address this barrier?

Q7. Please describe the budget allocation process at your institution?

Interview question number one and question number two, in combination with the demographic survey addressed the guiding questions that dealt with the organizational structure and supportive leadership for student affairs at the institution. Interview questions number two, five, six, & seven addressed the guiding questions that dealt with student engagement and learning centered policies and procedures. Interview questions number three and four addressed how the instititution defined student success and how the institution utilized data to make decisions.

PCC 1 Interview Response

Q1: What is the organizational structure of your institution; of the department?

The organizational structure consists of a leadership team comprised of the president, two vice-presidents, and two associate vice-presidents. The president is responsible for reporting to the Board of Trustees. The vice-presidents are responsible for administratve services and academic affairs and the associate vice-presidents are responsible for student affairs and human resources. The Vice-President of Student Services supervised the following six divisions: a) admissions; b) advising; c) special grants; d) the student success center; e) marketing and; f) research. Suprisingly, the financial aid department does not fall under the auspice of the VPSS, but the function is under the Vice-Presdient of Administrative Services. During the interview, the VPSS

clarified that while it is not typical, the institution is not the only PCC with that structure. She stated, “The Illinois Community College Board did a survey in the last year or two, it’s unusual, but there are a few that have a situation where administrative services oversees it [financial aid] but not too many.” Figure 4 depicts the organizational structure at PCC 1.

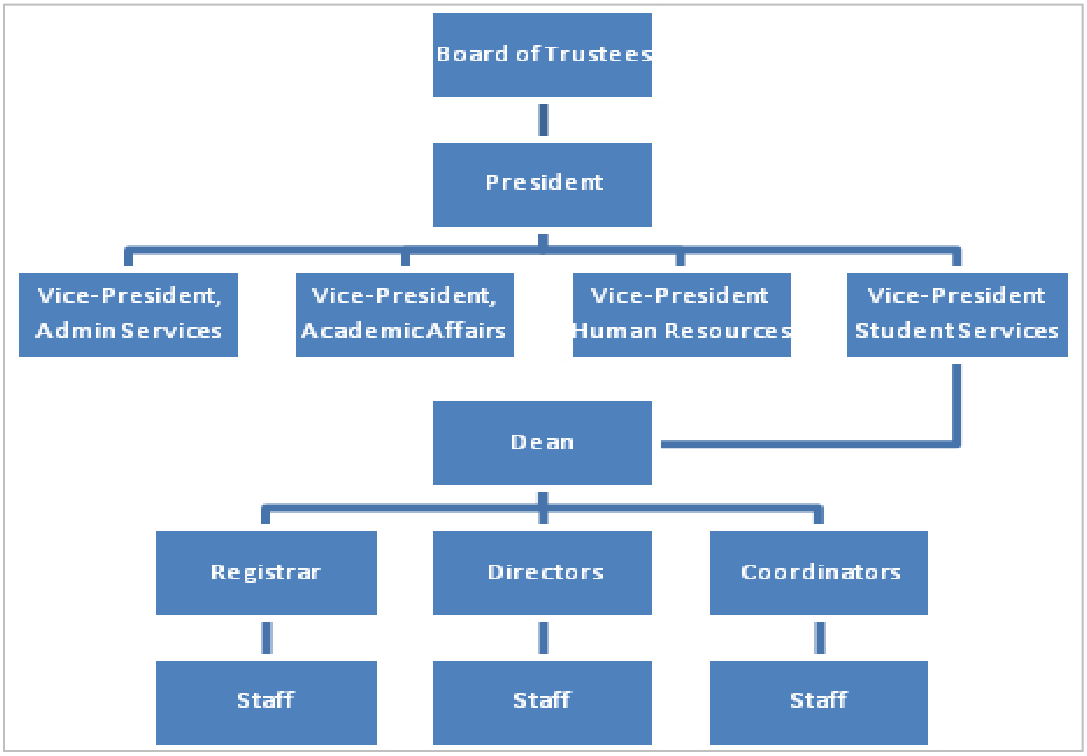


Figure 3. Organzational Chart of PCC1.
A Depiction of the level of hierarchy for the PCC1.

Q2. What services does your department currently provide to students? Which services are utilized the most and how often, which services are mandated?

Services provided by the division include: Admissions, Advising, Grants, Student Success Center, Marketing, Student Relations, Research, and the Registrar's Office. The VPSS reports that admissions and advising are two services that touch all students and that all first time students are required to meet with an advisor prior to registering for courses. One area that the VPSS would like to have more of an impact on the student body was tutoring services. Regarding this issue, she stated, "I certainly would like to see more students in a tutoring program. Students who do take advantage of tutoring program definitely experience improved grades, engagement and productivity in class, but it's hard to get students to use it." The institution, with the guidance of student affairs, is in the process of developing a retention plan for its student body. They currently have someone who is responsible for overseeing the retention services in the success center which housed the tutoring and first year experience program. Despite these services, the college is moving forward with extending and enhancing services through the development of a retention program. The VPSS further reported, "we had a pilot program for early alert and we would like to expand that and are planning that for the future." The college is currently using an in-house system that was developed by staff, but is investigating programs that would better assist the college with its efforts.

Q3. How and in what ways do you determine which services best support your student's success?

The VPSS reported that the institution is an AQIP school and as a result, the VPSS stated, " there is emphasis on assessment and continuous quality imporvement, we are making a lot of strides to get better at measuring our services." AQIP, an acronym for Academic Quality Improvement Program, provides an alternative process through which an organization can maintain its accredited status with The Higher Learning Commission. AQIP institutions must demonstrate that it meets The Higher Learning Commission's Criteria for Accreditation and other expectations through processes and ongoing activities that strive to continuously improve performance. The VPSS stressed, "each department is working on creating a dashboard that will examine success indicators and determining what they are and what they should be." In the areas of retention, the department has to submit an annual monitoring report to its board based on recruitment and retention levels.

The VPSS reports that the department is trying to do a better job at examining specific target groups or people who receive its services.

Q4. How does your institution define and track student success?

According to the Vice-President of Student Services, student success is defined by student completion rates and retention rates. She further reiterated that the institution understands that when students complete individual goals, that is a success, but it is often difficult to justify those accomplishments relative to term-to-term retention and institutional completion rates.

Q5. What do you feel is the biggest barrier for your department in regards to the services it provides to students?

The biggest barriers for the department is funding, staff ratio, and the under preparedness [academically] of its student body. Emphasizing this point, the VPSS stated:

> Certainly money is a barrier. We are a small college – we are in a state that is in a humongous financial crisis. We can do a lots of training and innovative things but we don't have the funds to support [the initiatives].

Consistent with the sentiment of PCC's across the nation, The VPSS also reported department is low on staff members. She stated, "The president jokes we're lean, almost anorexia, people wearing mutliple hats, often have new duties added – hard to let go of old duties." The final barrier, underpreparedness of the student was also reported. Eighty percent of new students test into at least one developmental course and it is a challenge for the institution to take the students from the point of entrance and prepare them for transfer to a four-year institution.

Q6. What do you feel is the biggest barrier for your students blocking their overall success? What is your department's response to address this barrier?

The biggest barrier reported by the VPSS that blocks student success was denial by the student because they think they can do everything on their own without assistance from the college. "Almost ¾ of our students are first generation – come in underprepared academically, but without knowledge of system and how to make it work", reports the VPSS. The institution will be administering the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE) in the fall to gather more information on the needs of its students and to help the instititution make better decisions and judgements on how to respond to student needs and what services to provide to the student body. The Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE) develops the SENSE and other surveys to assist institutions with resources and data for assessing and improving practices at the college . The VPSS also reported that the school did extensive work over the past three or four years, working to revamp in-take services to be more student-friendly and more efficient at guiding students through the system. All inquiries are assigned to student information specialists, essentially admission counselor/advisors, who are responsible for making direct contact with all students and then providing guidance on next steps in the process. The institution is contemplating utilizing live chat as part of its services to students, but there is hesitation in moving forward with the service. The VPSS stated:

> I have been talking to advisors and admission reps about going there [live chat] but we are a little scared, because again we are so lean, but I think it is critically

> important that we start to be available to students the way they want us to be available. I think many of them want us to be available electronically.

Q7: What is the budget allocation process at your institution?

Because the the Vice-President of Student Services (VPSS) is a part of the executive cabinet, she has a vital role in the budget allocation process and thus reviews and makes critical decisions about the institutions annual budget and allocation process. The institution utilizes incremental budgeting which involves rolling over the budget from the year before and submitting a proposal for anything additional. The VPSS states:

> The cabinet/counsel will prioritize the new requests. The leadership team, which I am a part of, will review and make decisions based upon what is available, and what will get funded. Decision is based on the strategic plan and priorities for the coming year.

The budget issue has caused a lot of constraint for the school and there was not a lot of additional funding to allocate which made it tough for the institution to incorporate new initiatives. However, the institution will be be using bond sell to fund special initiatives and projects at the college. The VPSS highlighted how the bond sell would benefit the division. He stated, “the sells will fund our technology projects, early alert program, test center, and website revamp, etc. The process will really support high level critical projects for student services. Should have real impact for students.”

PCC 2 Interview

Q1. What is the organizational structure of your institution; of the department? Do you sit on the presidential cabinet?

The organizational structure for PCC2, consisted of the board, the president, and four vice-presidents in the following areas: academic affairs, administrative services, student development and institutional advancement and research. Figure 5 illustrates the organizatonal chart of PCC2.

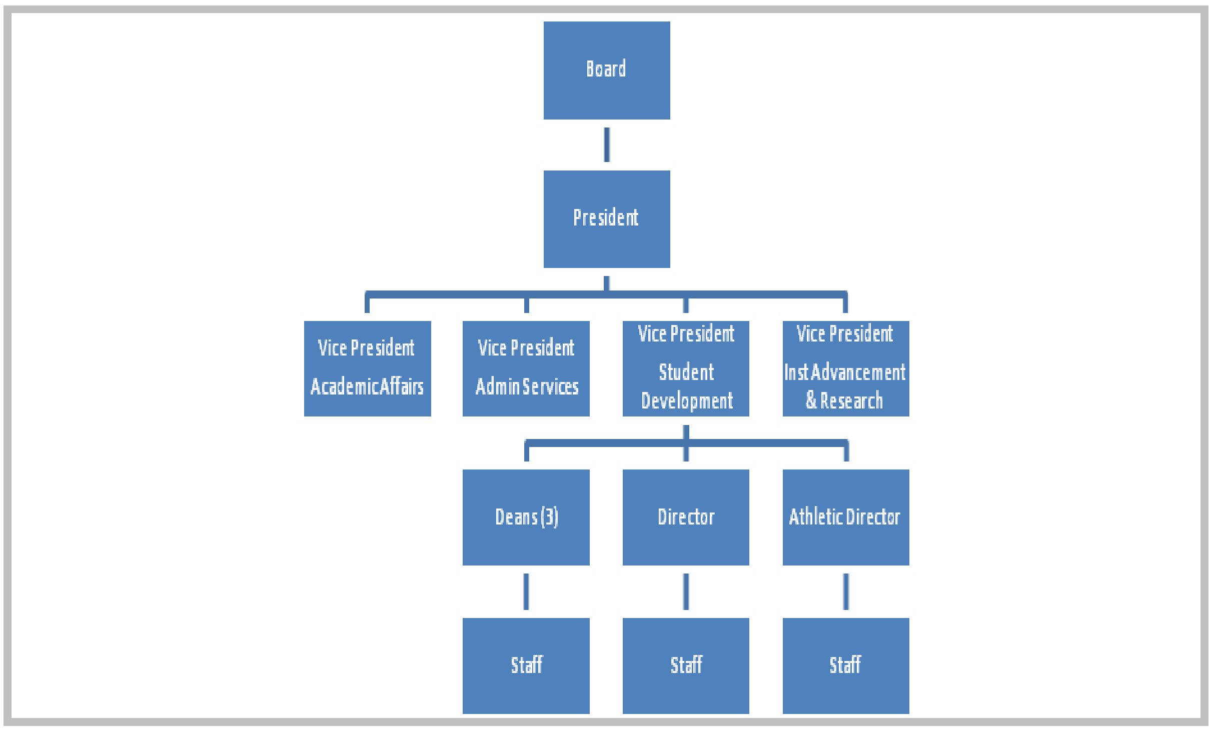


Figure 4. Organzational Chart PCC2.
Depicts the upper level of hierarchy for the college.

Even though the division offers a myriad of services, the VPSD did report that there are five direct reporting subordinates to the VPSD and each person is responsible for certain functional areas. The VPSD felt the college had wonderful structure in place which was a direct result of the institution undergoing a reorganzation in the past three years.

This reorganization included three administrators being added to the academic division of the college and two administrators [dean of enrollment management and dean of student success] being added to the student affairs division of the college.

Q2. What services does your department currently provide to students; which services are utilized the most and how often; which services are mandated or strongly encouraged?

The Vice-President of Student Develeopment reported the following responsibilities for the division of student development: a) multicultural student affairs; b) career services; c) student activities; d) holistic wellness center; e) judicial affairs; f) admissions and recruitment; g) financial aid; h) registrar's office; i) academic skills center; j) counseling and k) athletics. Madated services include new student orientation and advising services for all first time full time students.

Q3. How and in what ways do you determine which services best support your student's success?

The VPSD indicated that the institution looks at academic success and that each department is responsible for evaluating all services provided through the use of satisfaction surveys and usage rate of services.

Q4. How does your institution define and track student success?

When asked question number four, the VPSD reported that it is a real challenge for the institution because how the institution defines success is not necessarily what needs to be reported. The VPSD defines success as:

> Any individual student who meets his or her individual goals, whether it is to take one course for personal enrichment, to complete a certificate, to improve English

> language, to get an associate degree for a job, an associate degree to transfer, or to transfer without getting an associate degree. Of course, all along, we look at retention and completion rates – but ultimately, did the student reach his or her goal. For us, we define it as: a student meeting goal and then we try to measure that somewhat systematically in terms of retention. It is a pretty inexact science.

The VPSD also went on to report that the community colleges are thrilled that President Obama and his administration values the PCC and wants them to succeed, but that the issue of completion is a problem for all community colleges. The difference in how PCC's internally define success is in direct disparity in how the PCC's governing bodies define success. Issues with tracking PCC students were also another issue the discussed by the VPSD. She stated:

> If they [students] transfer to a four year institution shortly before completing their associate degree - that is a success for us. Illinois does not have a longitudal system for tracking students once they leave the CC other than if they graduated or complete certificate.

It was also pointed out that students often swirl, rotate enrollment between the four year and two year institutions and the PCC doesn't always know the outcome of their students.

Q5. What do you feel is the biggest barrier for your department in regards to the services it provides to students?

The biggest barrier reported for the department was staffing issues and the department's inability to add needed staff as the institution continued to grow. She highlighted:

> I was explaining to senior team – when we need additional classes and we need additional adjunct we just do it. But when enrollment grows and we add classes – we don't just get to add financial aid counselors and advisors, but we need to.

> In response to the growing student body, additional services are often needed, but in reality, the institution does not have enough staff to manage the services effectively.

One response the department implemented was to review the current processes and work diligently to restructure the process which would allow for a more efficient utilization of its staffing resources and a reconfiguration of its servicing areas. Student Services often struggles in terms of allocating appropriate staffing resources. The vice-president of student development drew attention to the fact that a formula does not exist for student affairs in terms of staffing ratio. He stated:

> One of my colleagues have a formula – if enrollment grows by X amount, then the institution will need X number of positions. It is a data driven formula that addresses the institutions ability to serve students. It makes sense. We could quantify that, most of us don't - we just go in begging for more staff during the budget cycle.

Q6. What do you feel is the biggest barrier for your student blocking their overall success? What is your department's response to address this barrier?

The VPSD believes it is the student's lack of academic preparedness coupled with how the institution responds that causes the major barrier for students. She emphasized that colleges often blame the student while not examining what the college could be doing that contributes to the student not being successful. She strongly emphasized, "It is easy to say it is not our fault, they just weren't ready. But part of our mission is to address the lack of readiness." The difference between the PCC student and a four year institution was also mentioned. She stated:

> Duke University ought to be graduating 99% of its students. Their students are coming with the advantageous, the background, and education - they ought to be successful.

She also stated the majority of her students but not all, come with an educational disadvantage.

The VPSD acknowledged that better communication is one factor that should be improved to help the students learn at the beginning of their academic tenure how to navigate successfully through their college experience. However, she did accentuate the following, "We need to help them to navigate to the extent needed, but then teach them to navigate themselves – issues of self efficacy." Approaches the institution took were to ensure that the website was clear and to focus on specific populations of its students such as students with Spanish speaking parents and African-American students by providing bi-lingual media and targeting local churches.

Q7. Please describe the budget allocation process at your institution?

The Vice-President of Student Development is a part of the leadership team at PCC2, and holds a vital role in the overall budgeting process of the college which involves each department starting with the prior year budget and justifying any additional dollars they are requesting for the next fiscal year. Overall, the VPSD feels that the college does a great job in supporting the needs of student affairs, despite the division having one of the smallest budgets in the department. She stressed, "From a senior perspective, student development probably has smallest budget of anybody in college, we are pretty lean. 80% of budget goes towards personnel. Personnel is where it is at for us – we need people to serve the students." The VPSD also reported that divisionally, each direct report submits requests and then the department meets and decide as a whole the priorities for the division which is then taken to the cabinet for a final decision to be made.

PCC 3 Interview Response

Q1. What is the organizational structure of your institution; of the department? Do you sit on the presidential cabinet?

The Dean of Student Services indicated that the organizational structure of PCC3 consisted of the president, the vice-president, the executive director of business operations, the academic deans and the dean of student services. The Dean of Students reported not being a part of the presidential cabinet. The organizational structure within the division consisted of the Dean, an Associate Dean, Director of Financial Aid, Director of Admissions and Enrollment and the Registrar. Figure 6 illustrates the organizational structure at PCC3.

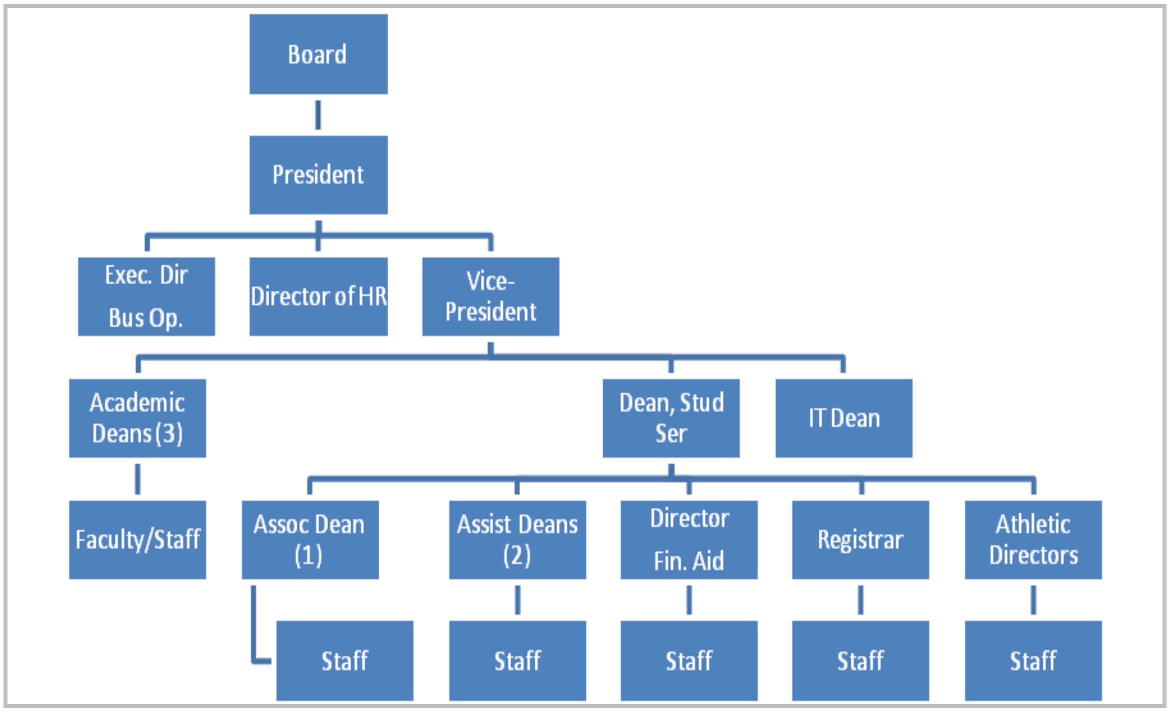


Figure 5. Organizational Structure for PCC3.
Provides a visual depiction of the organizational structure that exists at PCC3.

Q2. What services does your department currently provide to students? Which services are utilized the most and how often? Which services are mandated or strongly encouraged?

Services provided through the department include: admissions, advising, athletics, financial aid, assessment, career services, disabilities, discipline, student success center, and student activities. Services that are used the most include admissions, advising, and assessment. All new students must access admissions, advising services, and the assessment center. All of the other services are optional. Tutoring services are offered through the student success center and the Dean did express that the services are highly encouraged as a support for all students.

Q3. How and in what ways do you determine which services best support your student's success?

The institution uses results of its participation in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) in addition to internal surveys completed by its student body. An annual evaluation of all services offered through the division is also required. The dean reports, “Every year I have to evaluate all functions. I am responsible for and must submit a mid-year and end-of-year report to the executive cabinet.”

Q4. How does your institution define and track student success?

As with all PCC’s in the State of Illinois, the institution defines its student success as the number of students completing certificates or degrees. The Dean did reiterate that the method did not accurately reflect the true successes of its students because similar to other PCC’s, many of the students did not intend to complete a certificate or degree, but were successful in completing individual goals. He strongly emphasized, “Unfortunately, these successes do not matter with the state.”

Q5. What do you feel is the biggest barrier for your department in regards to the services it provides to students?

The biggest barrier reported for the department was the decrease in funding and significant reduction in staff as a result of the decrease. The Dean reported that the division recently lost three key positions and as a result, there is a lot of shifting of roles and responsibilities to adjust to the changes. He stated, “Some of the staff is feeling anxious, frustrated, and overworked; others are just relieved to still have a job.”

Q6. What do you feel is the biggest barrier for your student blocking their overall success? What is your department’s response to address this barrier?

The Dean also expressed that more and more students are in need of remediation in addition to other interventions because of social and emotional issues. The department has responded by requiring all new students to participate in new student orientation, providing more intensive tutoring services, and also implementing an early warning program.

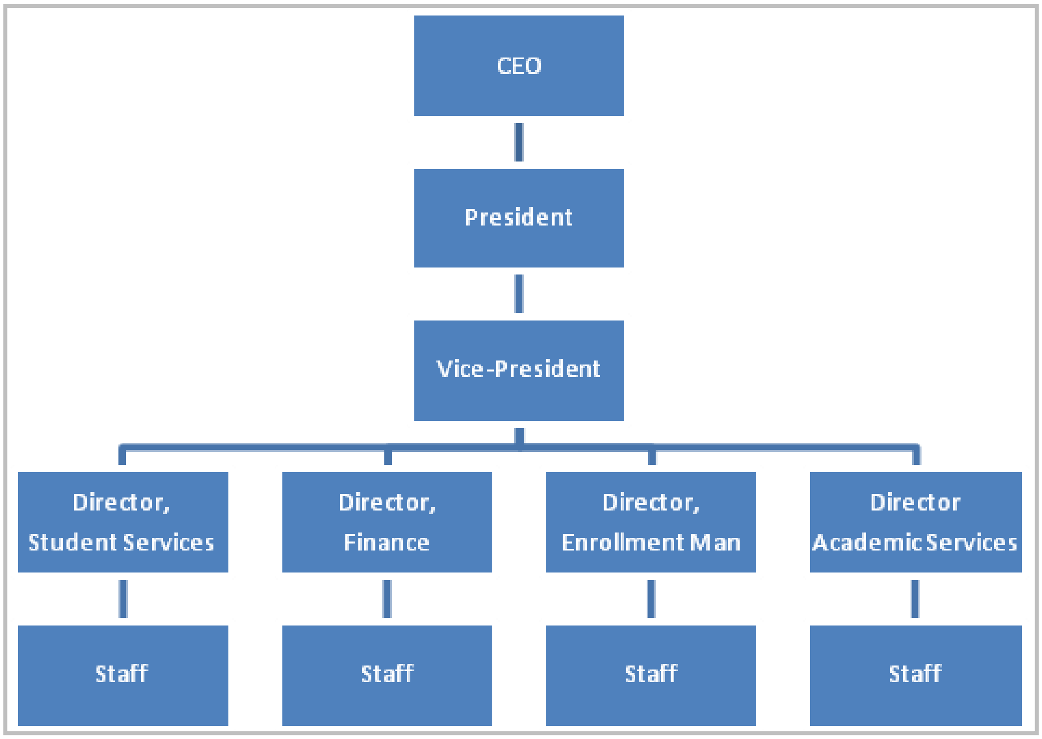
Q7. Please describe the budget allocation process at your institution?

The Dean pointed out that the budget allocation process has been extremely stressful. He emphasized, "The budget allocation has been very stressful as of late. We all know that we have to expect cuts and we are not going to get all of the dollars we request." Currently the budget allocation process consists of department heads submitting its annual plan with a budget justification to support all initiatives. "Every dollar that we request must have a justification, whether it is an increase or a decrease from the prior year, and we have to provide reasonable outcomes for all initiatives," stressed the dean. The executive cabinet reviews, makes modifications if needed, and the final budget is then submitted to the board for approval.

FPPSI 1 Interview Response

Q1. What is the organizational structure of your institution; of the department? Do you sit on the presidential cabinet?

FPPSI 1 reports that the organizational structure consists of shared governance in which the president reports to the Board of Trustee. Each division within the institution had autonomy to manage its department but the department head was individually responsible for ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of the division as a whole and submitting reports to the president. The executive cabinet consists of the department heads and the president who meet as a team to collaboratively make decisions about the



institution as a whole. Once the annual plan is developed, the president submits the plan to the board for final approval. Figure 7 depicts the organizational structure for FPPS1.

Figure 6. Organizational structure of FPPSI 1.
Provides a visual depiction of the organizational structure that exists at FPPSI 1.

Q2. What services does your department currently provide to students? Which services are utilized the most and how often? Which services are mandated or strongly encouraged?

The departmental services consist of advising, career, and financial services. The advising and career services are provided through a cohort model in which one person provides both services and the students maintained the same advisor throughout their tenure at the institution. Every student is required to utilize the services as it is a part of the admissions process. Students are also required to sign a payment contract prior to enrolling and therefore each student must also utilize the financial services. The director reports that the admissions office caters to its adult students and makes certain that they understand the institutions policies prior to enrolling in courses but that admissions is a standalone service that is managed by the enrollment division and not student services.

Q3. How and in what ways do you determine which services best support your student's success?

The Director of Student Services (DSS) reports that a collaborative approach is utilized to determine the services that best support student's needs. She states, "Our faculty suggests student needs based upon the academic perspective, advisors suggest non-classroom needs, and our students provide feedback through the use of surveys." All of the data is compiled and the department heads determine which services would provide optimal outcomes for the student body. Many services are made available to the student body, but the arrays of services are not housed under the division of student services.

Q4. How does your institution define and track student success?

The institution defines its student success based upon student's final grades and their success is tracked by completion rates and institutional surveys. As with for-profit institutions across the nation, FPPSI 1 is also experiencing scrutiny regarding job placement and is working to improve its services. The director reports, "We are currently working towards assessment of career attainment of our students."

Q5. What do you feel is the biggest barrier for your department in regards to the services it provides to students?

Despite the institution being a for-profit institution and not experiencing the same economic impact as the PCC sector, the director still feels that funding is an issue. The school had a decline in enrollment and that has significantly affected its budget. The director felt that her division received a balanced appropriation of available funds from the college.

Q6. What do you feel is the biggest barrier for your student blocking their overall success? What is your department's response to address this barrier?

The director reported that the biggest barrier for students was funding. "Our programs are very expensive, and often students are unable to afford the high cost of the classes." The institution has implemented institutional scholarships to help offset the costs in addition to partnering with many large corporations in the area who often send its employees for training and the company will partially cover the cost of the program or cover it completely.

Q7. Please describe the budget allocation process at your institution?

The director reports that there is a pool of funds made available each year and each department must ask for a specific dollar amount based upon the need to operate the department and all programs. The President's cabinet will review all requests with the department heads and based upon the review will either approve or deny the requests. The report is then submitted to the Board for final approval.

FPPSI 2 Interview Response

Q1. What is the organizational structure of your institution; of the department? Do you sit on the presidential cabinet?

FPPSI 2 organizational structure consists of the CEO and two presidents who supervise the ground division and the online division of the institution. Within each institution is a hierarchical level of senior vice-presidents and vice-presidents followed by directors and then staff for the functional areas. The director does not sit on the executive cabinet. Figure 8 depicts the organizational structure of FPPSI2.

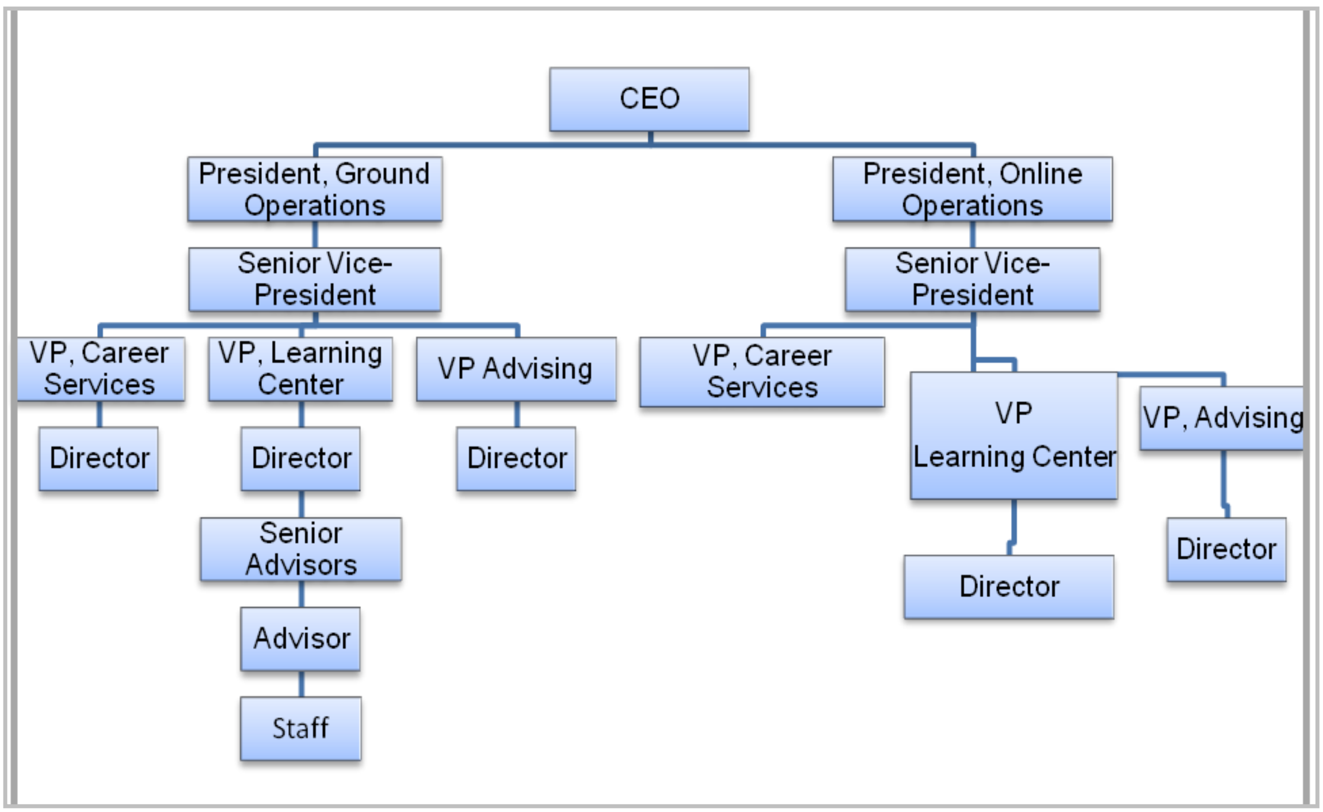


Figure 7. Organizational structure of FPPSI 2.
Provides a visual depiction of the organizational structure that exists at FPPSI 2.

Q2. What services does your department currently provide to students? Which services are utilized the most and how often? Which services are mandated or strongly encouraged?

The Director of Advising Services was interviewed for FPPSI 2 and reports that only advising services are provided within the division. However, there are varying levels of advising that consists of academic advisors who deal directly with academic advising and senior advisors who deal directly with resolving student issues. In addition to advising, the institution also provides the following services: admissions, financial aid, tutoring, career services, veteran services, and assessment. However, each area operates within a separate division with the same organizational structure depicted in Figure X above. All students are required to complete new student orientation prior to enrolling.

Q3. How and in what ways do you determine which services best support your student's success?

The director reports that the institution is very data driven and that it often analyzes student data. She indicates, "We use student success factors such as probation, grades, GPA, class participation, and of course graduation and retention rates. Our initiatives are driven by student success data".

Q4. How does your institution define and track student success?

The institution defines success as students who graduate and it is tracked by looking at the overall student population versus its graduation rate which is measured on a monthly and annual basis.

Q5. What do you feel is the biggest barrier for your department in regards to the services it provides to students?

The director did not feel that there were specific barriers that impeded its student's success.

Q6. What do you feel is the biggest barrier for your student blocking their overall success? What is your department's response to address this barrier?

Even though not a part of her departments function, the director did report that funding was a major obstacle for its student body. Financial aid was often used as a means to address the issue. The director also reported that students are sometimes their biggest obstacle because they do not take advantage of the resources available to them and they will sometimes stop responding to outreach from faculty and advisors. She drew attention to this matter by stating the following:

> Because the students are not responding, they are not getting tools needed to be successful. Students don't take advantage of available services and as a result, a lot of students are dismissed because of attendance and not passing their courses.

Like all institutions who utilize Title IV funding, the institution has set standards of academic progress that assesses classes taken versus credits earned. In addition, FPPSI 2 has also implemented additional standards. After taking the same class three times and failing the course each time warrants an academic dismissal. When a student has twenty-one consecutive days of absences, the student is automatically withdrawn so students don't accrue unnecessary charges. The institution has an Office of Attending Students that deals with appeals based on attendance. If the student is dismissed because of academic reasons, the student must take few courses at a CC or sit out for a certain period of time, i.e. 1 year, to be considered for re-admittance to the college.

Q7. Please describe the budget allocation process at your institution?

Each department submits a proposal to the president outlining activities and the funding needed to accomplish the activities. The president reviews and accepts the proposals or makes changes as needed and then submits to the CEO for final approval.

FPPSI 3 Interview Response

Q1. What is the organizational structure of your institution; of the department? Do you sit on the presidential cabinet?

The organizational structure of FPPSI 3 consists of the campus president, two levels of vice-presidents, two levels of directors, and a manager who is responsible for the various divisions within the institution. Each division has a maximum of three functional levels. The online division also has the same organizational structure. Figure 9 depicts the overall organizational structure of the institution and the organizational structure of the SA division.

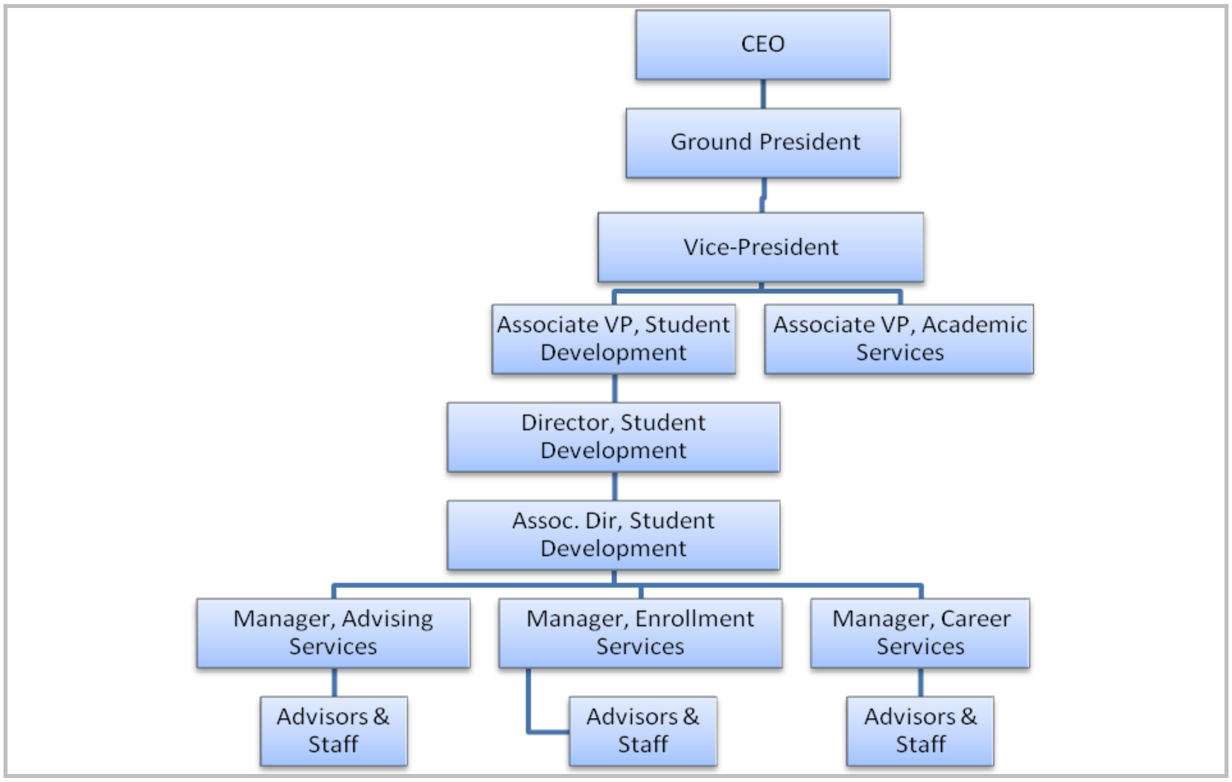


Figure 8. Organizational structure of FPPSI 3.
Provides a visual depiction of the organizational structure that exists at FPPSI 3. *The online division is reported to have the same structure but is not depicted in the figure.

Q2. What services does your department currently provide to students? Which services are utilized the most and how often? Which services are mandated or strongly encouraged?

The services provided under the division include academic advisement, enrollment services, and career planning and placement. Enrollment services and advisement are required for all students. Career services are optional but strongly encouraged. The manager stated, "We have excellent services for services, but many of the students chose to wait until the last minute to access the services, it would be ideal if accessed earlier in the student's academic career."

Q3. How and in what ways do you determine which services best support your student's success?

The Manager stated the following:

> Students are the biggest determining factor. Because we only offer a few services that we all know are valuable, it is not a hard decision to make, they are often very vocal in telling us their needs and what doesn't work for them.

The institution uses internal data collected from its student body in combination with feedback from annual program evaluations. Every service that is provided at the institution has an evaluation component, either measuring the service provided or by gathering the student's perception and effectiveness of the service.

Q4. How does your institution define and track student success?

The director reported, "This is probably the easiest thing we do." Student success was based on the institutions completion rate of certificates and degrees and it was tracked by the number of students completing annually.

Q5. What do you feel is the biggest barrier for your department in regards to the services it provides to students?

The director felt that the biggest barrier was a combination of pressure to enroll but also the negative attention many of the FPPSI's are receiving. He stressed, "We are often described as predators who are taking advantage of students. Certainly there are a few institutions that are misleading, but unfortunately, they make it bad on all of us."

Q6. What do you feel is the biggest barrier for your student blocking their overall success? What is your department's response to address this barrier?

The director reported that the biggest barrier for its students was time constraints and other responsibilities outside of school that impacted student success. He emphasized his point by stating:

> Some students just have too much going on, and because many of our students are working adults, they sometimes have a hard time juggling the different responsibilities or they have been out of school for a long time and have a hard time adjusting.

Q7. Please describe the budget allocation process at your institution?

The departments are aware there is a pool of available funds, but each department must submit a plan detailing initiatives and activities that they planned to implement for the academic year. The plan is reviewed by the budget and planning committee and the department may be asked to justify certain requests. The institution's overall budget is then submitted by the president to the board for approval.

Cross Case Analysis

The purpose of this study is to investigate the roles, functions, and organizational structure of Student Affairs within Public Community Colleges (PCC's) and For-Profit Post Secondary Institutions (FPPSI's) to identify core dynamics that contribute most to student success. The research design consisted of a mixed-method approach that included quantitative and qualitative data collection. The quantitative data collection phase included semi-structured interviews at three public community colleges and three for-profit post-secondary institutions. The quantitative data collection consisted of surveys of responding institutions and institutional data collection for all sixty-eight institutions identified for the study. The following section provides a cross-case analysis on the public to public sector, the for-profit to for-profit sector, and the public to for-profit sector.

Public to Public

The organizational structure of the public community colleges was consistent across all three colleges used in the qualitative phase of the study. Each campus reported having the same organizational structure that consisted of a hierarchical model which was comprised of the board of trustees, the president, the executive cabinet, vice-presidents reporting to the president, administrative staff of deans and directors who also reported upward, followed by the staff. One major difference is that PCC 3 did not have a dedicated vice-president of student affairs, but one vice-president who was responsible for the academic affairs and student affairs division of the college. Table 22 provides an overview of the organizational structure that is currently in existence at PCC1, PCC2, and PCC3.

Table 22.
Organizational Structure PCC

PCC 1	PCC 2	PCC 3
Board	Board	Board
President	President	President
Vice-President SA	Vice-President of SA	Vice-President – entire college
Deans	Deans/Directors	Deans
Directors	Staff	Assist Deans/Directors
Staff		Staff

Despite its size and organizational structure, the public community colleges traditionally offer the same services. Germane to all the public community colleges within the study, the division of student affairs had a minimum of seven functional areas with some schools reporting up to fourteen functions. The predominant functions at the PCC's include: academic and career advising, registrar, admissions, financial aid, and career services. Differences existing between the colleges are most apparent in the areas of financial aid, marketing and research. PCC1 in comparison with PCC2 and PCC3 does not have financial aid as one of its functional units and PCC1 is the only college in which the division is responsible for marketing and research. Table 23 provides a visual overview of services provided by the PCC's.

Table 23.
Functions of Student Affairs PCC1, 2, & 3

PCC1	***PCC2***	***PCC3***
Admissions	Admissions	Admissions
Advising	Assessment	Advising
Grants	Athletics	Athletics
*Student Success Center	Financial Aid	Financial Aid
Marketing	**Counseling	Student Conduct
Student Relations	Career Services	Disability Services
Research	*Academic Skills Center	Registrar's Office
Registrar's Office	Disability Services	Student Activities
	Student Life	Assessment
	Student Conduct	Tutoring Services
	Residence	
	Registrar's Office	
	Multi-cultural Services	

**Student Success and Academic Skills provided tutoring services*
***Counseling services included advisement*

Incremental budgeting is used by each of the PCC's and each college reported that it has to justify any requested increases in the budget from the year before. All activities are directly tied to the mission of the college and priorities established for the institution. In regards to providing services to students, each institution reported that its biggest barrier is funding restrictions as a direct result of the current economic crisis in the United States which has led to significant decreases in state funding. Differences that exist include the college's capacity to autonomously respond to the declining budget. PCC1 was able to make use of bond sales to support the division, whereas PCC2 and PCC3 continue to struggle with responding to the crisis and are reevaluating services to ensure optimal student outcomes with its limited resources. All three colleges indicated that their institution is lean on staff and that their staff all wore multiple hats to serve their students.

Each of the public community college's report that the most significant barrier impacting their students success was the lack of academic preparation and each college understands that the institution must be prepared to respond to the students need to increase their chance of success. Each institution reported that it plans to use some form of technology to improve business processes. Table 24 reflects the PCC's student barriers, institutional barriers, and the institutions response to the barriers.

Table 24.
Barriers and Response of PCC's

	PCC 1	PCC 2	PCC 3
Student Barriers	Student denial **Underprepared** First generation	**Underprepared** Financial issues	**Underprepared** First generation Unclear goals
Institutional Barriers	**Funding** **Staff ratio** College not prepared to deal with student issues	**Funding** **Staffing issues** Culture of blaming Spacing issues	**Funding** **Staffing issues** Lack of institutional support Lack of technology resources
Institutional Response	Revamp intake services Admission Advisors/Counselors Electronic processing Increase technology resources Bond Sales	Reorganization of units Improve communications Better use of website Focus on specific groups Balance staff with enrollment	Enhance enrollment services Electronic processing Develop remedial cohorts

FPPSI to FPPSI

The overall organizational structure of the FPPSI's in the study varied greatly amongst the three institutions used for the qualitative phase of the study. The differences may be attributed to the varying size of each institution, as well as some institutions being more traditional with ground services whereas two of the institutions had larger online programs. The FPPSI had many mid-level managers that focused on specific functional areas of the institution. Table 25 provides an overview of the organizational structures of the for-profit post-secondary institutions.

Table 25.
Organizational Structure FPPSI

FPPSI 1	**FPPSI 2**	**FPSSI 3**
Board	CEO	CEO
President	Senior President	President
Vice-President	President	Vice-President
Directors	Vice-President	Associate Vice-Presidents
Staff	Directors	Directors
	Senior Advisors	Associate Directors
	Staff	Managers
		Staff

Services provided by the FPPSI's were also consistent within the Division of Student Affairs, albeit, two of the FPPSI did not refer to the division as Student Affairs. Each division had its own managing unit that was overseen by a vice-president or comparable executive manager. Each service area had a specific focus and did not include more than three functions per divisional area. A significant difference existed for FPPSI 2 which had an entire division dedicated to advising services only, whereas FPPSI 1 and FPSSI 3 had advising services integrated as one of the core functions within the division. The advising division was also unique in that it had two sub-divisions, one responsible for handling student resolution issues and the other strictly responsible for academic advisement. Table 26 provides a visual depiction of services provided by the FPPSI sector.

Table 26.
Services Provided by FPPSI's

FPPSI 1	FPSSI 2	FPSSI 3
Advising	***(Advising Division)***	**Advising**
Financial Services	General Advising	Enrollment Services
Career Advising	Student Resolution	Financial Services

Barriers to student success from the student and institutional perspective also varied from institution to institution. FPPSI reported that its student's barriers ranged from lack of technological resources to issues with student attendance. Interesting, there was no data provided that was consistent across all three institutions, FPPSI 1 and FPPSI 2 each report funding as a student barrier and FPPSI 2 and FPPSI 3 report perception as an institutional barrier. Identified student barriers, institutional barriers, and the FPPI's response to the barriers are depicted in Table 27.

Table 27.
Barriers and Response by FPPSI's

	FPPSI 1	**FPPSI 2**	**FPPSI 3**
Student Barriers	Limitation of technology Funding	Funding Attendance	Outside commitment
Institutional Barriers	Perception of FPPSI	None	Pressure to enroll Perception
Institutional Response	Provide financial services more scholarships Provide laptops	Provide FA Services Have attendance and academic specialists	No response given

Public versus For-profit

While there are several factors that are similar between public community colleges and for-profit post secondary institutions, there are also striking differences that exist between the two sectors. The following section provides detailed cross-case analysis of both types of sectors (public versus for-profit) utilizing the qualitative and quantitative data collected for the study.

Organizational Structure

In regards to organizational structure, the FPPSI had a more complex hierarchical structure and more mid-level managers that dealt directly with student issues and provided more direct supervision to lower management, a model that is more in alignment with as a business model. The PCC's had a simpler structure and typically did not offer as many mid-level managers in comparison to the FPPSI's. One consistency between both institutions included a president and at least one vice-president; the difference existed in the number of positions offered at the institutions. All of the PCC's had only one president, whereas the FPPSI would range from one to two presidents and each had a minimum of two vice-presidents responsible for specific divisional areas.

The additional administrators at the FPPSI when compared to the PCC could account for differences in the perception of the executive officers interviewed for the study in regards to institutional support for the division of Student Affairs. Figure 9 provides a visual display of the differences in organizational structure at both types of institutions.

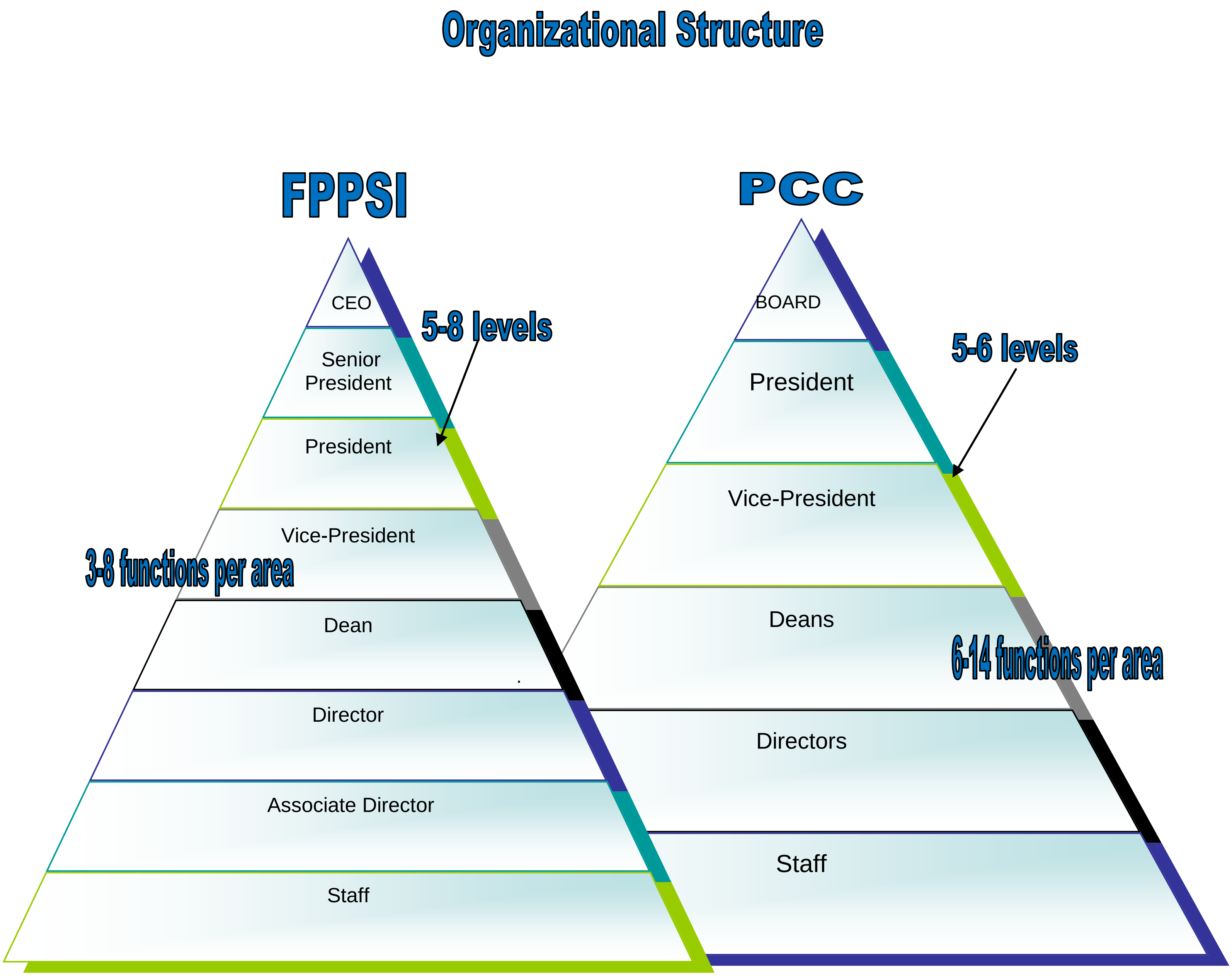


Figure 9. Organizational Structure for FPPSI and PCC.

General Services of Student Affairs

Services that are most common at both types of institutions include advising, financial aid, career planning, tutoring, admissions and registration processing. The top three services offered at the PCC's include admissions, advising, and financial aid; whereas the top three services offered at the FPPSI's include advising, career planning, and job placement. On average, the PCC's provide 6-14 different functions, while the FPPSI's provide an average of 3-8 services through the division of Student Affairs. Inference can be made that the PCC sector is more concerned with student life and activities than the FPPSI sector.

The differences in the range of functions may be attributed to the organizational structure within the division of student affairs, which is similar to the overall organizational structure of the institutions. The FPPSI's had a more complex structure within student affairs allowing for more mid-level management while providing less functionalities; The PCC's typically had a much simpler structure but offers more services to its student body. Both sectors reported that admission services is a requirement, however the differences in response rates may be attributed to institutional terminology differing or the services were not provided by the division reporting data. For example, some of the institutions used enrollment services and some used admissions, but both served the same purpose, managing the business processes and practices for admission to the institution. Table 28 represents the data collected in the qualitative phase for the service areas of both sectors.

Table 28.
Comparison of Services offered by the PCC & FPPSI

PCC	FPPSI
Admissions	Advising
Assessment	Financial Services
Athletics	Career Advising
Financial Aid	Enrollment Services
Advising/Counseling	Student Resolution
Career Services	
Academic Skills Center	
Disability Services	
Student Life	
Student Conduct	
Residence	
Registrar's Office	
Multi-cultural Services	

The data collected regarding service areas for all sixty-eight institutions in the study indicate that advising services was consistently critical with the PCC sector reporting 91.70% and the FPPSI sector reporting 90.00%. The next most implemented services include admissions and registration, career planning and financial services. It should be noted that both sectors sometimes use advising/counseling and admissions/registration interchangeably. Table 20 provides a visual illustration of the response rate for services available to students by institutional type.

Table 29.
Comparison of Services offered by the PCC & FPPSI

	PCC		FPPSI	
Admissions	13	27.10%	8	40.00%
Advising Services	44	**91.70%**	18	**90.00%**
Assessment/Testing	22	45.80%	7	35.00%
Athletics	12	25.00%	0	0.00%
Bursar's/Business Office	2	4.20%	0	0.00%
Campus Bookstore	13	27.10%	3	15.00%
Campus Social Activities	5	10.04%	0	0.00%
Career Planning/Services	41	**85.40%**	16	**80.00%**
Counseling	29	**60.40%**	4	20.00%
Cultural Programs	4	8.03%	0	0.00%
Disability Services	29	**60.40%**	8	40.00%
Discipline	11	22.90%	0	0.00%
Diversity Programs	5	10.40%	0	0.00%
Financial Aid	35	**72.90%**	11	55.00%
Intramural Sports	1	2.10%	1	5.00%
Job Placement	14	29.20%	16	**80.00%**
Library Resources	13	27.10%	5	25.00%
New Student Orientation	11	22.90%	5	25.00%
Other	29	**60.40%**	11	55.00%
Peer Mentors	6	12.50%	2	10.00%
Peer Tutors	7	14.60%	2	10.00%
Registration/Enrollment Services	23	47.90%	6	30.00%
Security	2	4.20%	0	0.00%
Student Center	7	14.60%	1	5.00%
Student Government	30	**62.50%**	3	15.00%
Student Success /Freshman Seminar	3	6.30%	1	5.00%
Tutoring Lab/Services	13	27.10%	10	50.00%

Barriers

Regardless of sector, both the for-profit post-secondary institutions (FPPSI's) and the public community colleges (PCC's) encounter barriers at the student and institutional level that have a significant impact on the schools ability to effectively provide services to its students. Not surprisingly, the PCC's all reported that one of its main barriers was the high percentage of students who are enrolling at the institution testing below college level coursework. The average percentage of students needing remediation was consistent (70%). In comparison, the FPPSI's reported that educational cost was a major barrier for its students, accounting for the higher number of student loans being utilized by students to supplement the cost of their attendance.

Institutional barriers for the PCC's included funding, low staff ratio, and under utilization of technology to efficiently provide services to students; compared to FPSSI's reporting intense scrutiny by the Department of Education and the Federal Government as a primary barrier. The institutions response to the barriers also varied by sector type with the public community college (PCC) focusing on generating alternative funding sources, reorganization, and improving technology while the for-profit post-secondary institution (FPPSI) is focusing on rebuilding its image and restructuring its recruitment and enrollment practices. Table 30 illustrates the barriers and responses by both sectors.

Table 30.
Barriers and Responses

	PCC	FPPSI
Student Barriers	Students underprepared academically Student denial	Educational Cost Technology Attendance/ lack of follow through
Institutional Barriers	Funding Staff ratio Lack of technology	Under scrutiny
Institutional Responses	Funding alternatives Reorganization of divisions Revamp enrollment services	Financial services/ Institutional scholarships Student laptops PR Strategies Recalibration of curriculum and practices

Technology

Another area that was explored was the institutions capacity to effectively utilize technology to improve and enhance services provided to students. As expected, the FPPSI's are more advanced in this area, but the PCC's are striving to enhance services. All of the institutions, regardless of sector, offered social media via Face book or Twitter, or other online social sites. The FPPSI's provided 100% e-advising and two of the three FPPSI's offered instant chat, either twenty four hours or during normal business hours. None of the PCC's provided instant chat services, but two of the institutions expressed the desire to offer the service pending future resources.

The FPPSI's also had a 100% response rate for providing online student resolution whereas only 33.3% (n=1) of the PCC's offered online student resolution. Conjecture can be made that the PCC's are more accepting of handling student issues face to face, whereas the FPPSI's are more inclined to deal with issues from a distance because of the FPPSI's adapting more of a business model which minimizes face-to-face contact. However, from the response rate of the PCC's, it is evident that less face-to-face contact is the direction of the new technology age, and the implementation of online resolution can ease two challenges, low staffing issues and the student's desire for a more immediate response. Table 31 provides a synopsis of the sectors technology capacity.

Table 31.
Technology capacity

	Social Media	E-Advising	Instant Chat	Online Resolution
PCC 1	Yes	Yes	No	No
PCC 2	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
PCC 3	Yes	No	No	No
FPPSI 1	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
FPPSI 2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
FPPSI 3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Success Indicators

The success indicators identified for the study include institutional retention rates, completion rates, job placement rates, and default rates. The quantitative data consists of the state-wide data collected on all sixty-eight institutions that had reported information to the Integrated Postsecondary Education System (IPEDS). The information reported for the case study data was segmented from the six institutions used in the qualitative data collection phase of the study. Table 32 provides an overview of the data collected during both phases of the study. The data display is followed by a narrative detailing the findings.

Table 32.

Average Success Rates

	PCC	FPPSI
State Wide – quantitative data		
Retention Rate	55.83%	59.53%
Completion Rate	27.73%	49.76%
Job Placement Rate	69.02%	83.22%*
Default Rate (3 year average)	9.93%	10.87%
Case Study Sample – qualitative data		
Retention Rate	57.00%	60.00%
Completion Rate	15.66%	43.50%
Job Placement Rate	76.21%	80.00%
Default Rate (3 year average)	12.88	12.46%

**Data reported is for 50% of FPPSI's in the study*
***All data gathered from IPEDS*

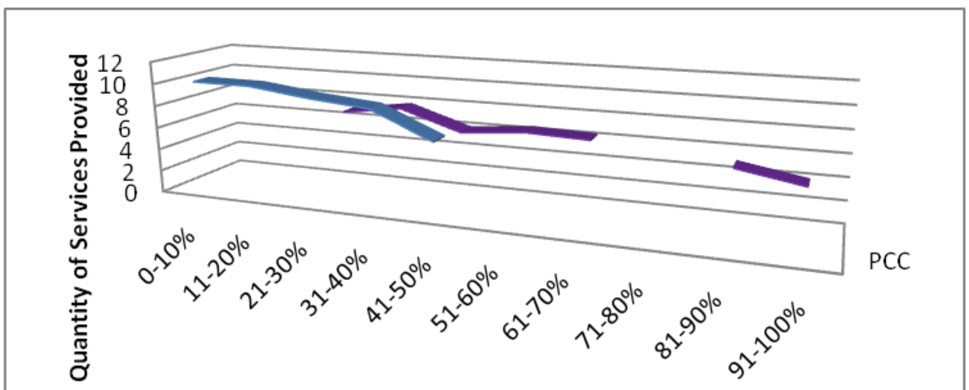
Retention Rates.

The data indicates that overall, within the State of Illinois, the FPPSI's have a slightly higher retention rate, 59.53% compared to 55.83% for the PCC's. Worthy of note and consistent with the literature, the for-profit post-secondary average completion rate, 49.76%, is now higher than the public community college's average completion rate, 27.73%. The qualitative data collection regarding the success indicators was consistent with the quantitative data collected on all sixty-eight institutions. The retention rate for the

FPPSI was slightly higher than the PCC's, 60% compared to 57%; more profound, the average completion rate for the FPPSI's 43.50%, was double the average rate of the PCC's, 15.66%.

Completion Rates.

In harmony with the research literature, the completion rates for the for-profit post-secondary institutions (FPPSI's) were also higher in comparison to the public community college sector (PCC's). The average completion rate for the PCC's statewide was 27.73% compared to an average completion rate of 49.76% for the FPPSI's. The site selection data showed an even larger disparity between the two sectors. The FPPSI's average completion rate of 43.50% was almost four times higher than the PCC's which had an average rate of only 15.66%. More significantly, the data indicates that as the number of services typically decreased, the completion rate increased which is depicted in Figure 10.



	0-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%
PCC	10.11	10.08	9.4	8.9	6.5					
FPPSI			7	7.75	6	6.5	6.3		5	4

Figure 10. **Services and Completion Rates.**
Provides a visual depiction of services offered compared to Institutional completion rate

Job Placement Rates.

The survey data set reveals that the PCC's are more transparent with 100% of its colleges providing data whereas, the FPPSI's are not as forthcoming with this data, only 50% of the institutions had the data available for the general public. The differences could be contributed to regulations by accrediting bodies and what information is a requirement versus what information is optional. The FPPSI's have an average job placement rate of 83.22% statewide and the PCC's have an average rate of 69.2%, but the data is not a true representation of the FPPSI's as it only accounts for 50% of the institutions identified for the study. The case study data is less skewed as both sectors each provided data on two-thirds (2 out of 3) of its institutions participating in the study. The average response rate for the PCC's was 76.21%, which is only slightlty lower than the FPPSI's, which reports an 80% average job placement rate.

Default Rates.

Each sector, regardless of accreditation status, that provides federal student loans to its student body are required to report default rates. Default data was collected from the Integrated Post Secondary Data System (IPEDS) on both sectors for the 2005, 2006, and 2007 academic school year. Suprisingly, in direct contrast with the literature review that indicates the FPPSI's having a significantly higher default rate than PCC's, the Illinois average default rate for the FPPSI's, 10.87, was only slightly greater than the PCC which reported a rate of 9.93%. Even more revealing is the difference displayed in the qualitative data sets. The PCC's report an average rate of 12.88%, which is slightly higher than the FPPSI's average rate of 12.46%.

CHAPTER 5:

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, & CONLUSION

Overview of Study

The purpose of this doctoral study was to investigate the roles, functions, and organizational structure of Student Affairs within Public Community Colleges (PCC's) and For-Profit Post Secondary Institutions (FPPSI's) to identify core dynamics that contribute most to student success. Institutional data was collected on sixty-eight institutions within the State of Illinois and semi-structured interviews were conducted with executive officers from three PCC's and three FPPSI's to garner a deeper understanding of the organizational structure, success indicators, and role and functions of student affairs in supporting student success. This final chapter provides an overview of the study through discussion, answers the research questions in the form of a conclusion, considers implications for both the PCC and FPPSI sectors, and suggests recommendations for further research.

Chapter one consisted of a general overview of the purpose of the study, detailed the research questions that guided the study, presented an overview of the research design, discussed the significance of the study, and provided operational definitions.

Chapter two provided an overview of the historical and current perspective of the public community college and for-profit post-secondary sectors, including current challenges and the organizational structures of the institutions detailing various reporting structure, roles, functions and services provided by the division. Also included was a summation of the complex development of student affairs which detailed the various paradigm shifts: (a) student services, (b) student development and, (c) student learning.

Finally, the chapter concludes with an extensive review of Open System Theory, and Margaret Culp's, Eleven Factors that assist Senior Student Affairs Executive Officers (SSAO) in creating and sustaining functions that truly support the success of it students (2003), both of which formed the conceptual framework of this study.

Chapter three explicated the research design, methodology, participant selection criteria and process, ethical considerations, and limitations of the study, and role of the researcher. The first section of the chapter detailed how this study made use of a sequential mixed-method equal-dimension design and why this design was best suited for the study. The next section addressed the data collection procedures which included surveys, institutional data collection, semi-structured interviews, and field notes. The final sections detailed information on data analysis, which included coding of data and descriptive statistics. Finally, the research limitations, ethical considerations, and the researchers' personal experience in relation to the study concluded the chapter.

Chapter four provided data displays and discussion on the information obtained during the quantitative and qualitative data collection phase. The researcher incorporated visual aids such as tables and figures to amalgamate the data, allowing for a straightforward reading and conclusion of the data.

Discussion of Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the roles, functions, and organizational structure of student affairs within public community colleges (PCC's) and for-profit post secondary Institutions (FPPSI's) to identify core dynamics that contribute most to student success. The study seeks to add to the body of knowledge on student affairs organizational structure and best practice. More importantly, it will address a gap in literature: a lack of formal studies comparing student affairs organizational structure and functions between for-profit post-secondary institutions and public community colleges. Additionally the study will seek to identify an organizational model that infuses business practices with academic practices to produce optimal outcomes. This section will summarize the findings relevant to the five research questions guiding the study. Guiding questions number one through three were addressed in the quantitative phase and questions four and five were addressed in the qualitative phase.

Research Question 1

Is there a difference in the completion and retention rates of students enrolled in Illinois public community colleges when compared to the completion and retention rates of students enrolled in Illinois for-profit post-secondary institutions?

The study found that there is a difference in the completion, retention rates, and job placement rates of students enrolled in Illinois public community colleges (PCC's) when compared to the same rates of students enrolled in Illinois for-profit post-secondary institutions (FPPSI's). In terms of the intistutional retention rates collected for all sixty-eight institutions, the data implies that there is not a significant difference between the two sectors. The FPPSI's institutional data set collected in the quantitative phase reveals a rate of 59.53% compared with the PCC's having a retention rate of 55.83%. The qualititative data collected for the case study is also consistent with the quantitative data collection phase, only reporting a 3% difference amongst the two sectors, 57% (PCC) to 60% (FPPSI).

In regards to completion, it was discovered that the FPPSI's have an average completion rate of 49.76%, a rate that is almost double the average completion rate of the PCC's which is only 27.73%. More notably, the institutional data showed an even larger disparity between the two sectors with the the FPPSI students having a completion rate of 3:1 when compared to those of the PCC students. Further review denotes that the FPPSI did not have a completion rate lower than 20%; whereas the lowest completion rate reported for the PCC sector is less than 10%.

Implications for practice.

The data implies that both sectors are consistent with retention rates, however it appears that the for-profit post-secondary instituitions sector is more effective at retaining and completing the student enrolled at its institutions. It may behoove the public community college sector to examine what similarities and variations exist in the number and type of functions offered at the FPPSI to determine if a mirroring of some these practices and reduced functions would be advantageous to the PCC sector.

More importantly, a closer examination may be beneficial to those institutions that report a huge disparity between its retention rate and completion rate. The question becomes why is the institution able to retain at such a high rate, yet not able to complete at a similar rate. More importantly, perhaps a deeper assessment and tracking of what the students true intent is and how to effectively measure that intent as a successful outcome may be warranted.

Research Question 2

What differences exist in the types of Student Affairs services offered at Illinois PCC's when compared to Illinois FPPSI's?

While there were commonalities that existed in terms of services offered, there were also considerable differences that existed between the two sectors. Not suprisingly, the most prominent function provided, regardless of sector, included advising or counseling services, terms which were sometimes used interchangeabley. The most obvious difference that existed were the number of services offered when the two sectors were compared. On average, the division of student affairs within the PCC sector had a minimum of seven functional areas with some schools reporting up to fourteen functions; the FPSSI report a minimum of two functional areas with a maximum of four functional areas per division. The predominant functions reported at the PCC's include: academic and career advising, disability access, registrar, admissions, financial aid, and career services. The predominant functions offered within the FPPSI were contingent on how the institution divided the student affairs division. The principal functions offered at the FPPSI include advising, financial services, enrollment services, and student resolution. Both sectors identified advising, financial services, new student orientation, career counseling, and tutoring as critical services that support students.

Another difference that exists was how services were provided to the students. The FPPSI sector utilized technology more as opposed to the PCC sector. For example, technology was more prevalent at the FPPSI, resulting in a quicker response rate to students through the use of online instant chat, online student resolution, higher instances of e-advising services, and implementation of electronic business processesses. The PCC sector noted that they were aware that this was an area of improvement, and more importantly, opportunities needed to be reviewed that would allow for the integration of technology, speficially in the area of electronic business processes.

Implications for practice.

According to the data presented, it appears that the most critical functions offered to students include advising and counseling services. As the PCC sector continues to struggle with trying to provide services to students with decrease funding, perhaps a reorganization of what services are offered warrants a deeper investigation. The time of "being everything to everyone" may no longer be an option, but a more strategic and purposeful use of available services may be necessary.

Another factor to consider is how the services are provided. While the argument can be made that the FPPSI sector has a more hands-off approach whereas the PCC sector is more hands-on as it relates to student issues, perhaps an increased infusion of online services would be a benefit to the PCC sector. If lack of resources is an issue, the increased use of technology may improve the efficiency of services, resulting in less man power needed to cover services. This generation is accustomed to getting a more immediate response, a quick response that only technology can provide. Enhancing general services with advanced technology may be one way to address a lack of resources while providing the capability to respond to student needs more efficiently.

On the other hand, the FPPSI may reconsider implementing more opportunities for more face-to-face resolution to help the student feel a deeper sense of belonging and sense of being heard. The availability of increased face-to-face contact may help the students feel more connected to the institution as well as the general public, allowing for more transparency and may help to decrease the negative perceptions that exist for the FPPSI sector.

Research Question 3

Is there a significant difference in the number of services provided by the Office of Student Affairs service at the institutions with higher completion rates as compared to institutions with lower completion rates?

The research findings strongly suggest that a relationship exists between the number of service areas offered and the institutions completion rate. According to the data collected, as the number of functional service areas decreases, the completion rate increases. Most significantly and germane to the public community college sector, a decrease by one service area contributed to an increase into the next percentile completion range. Overall, 87.88% of the institutions reported a completion rate of less than 50% and offered an average of eight services within the division compared to 12.12% of the institutions reporting a completion rate of 51% or higher and only offering an average of four services within the division. Inference can be made that there is a relationship between institutions that have fewer but distinct and strategic services and overall completion rates.

Implications for practice.

The for-profit post-secondary institutions (FPPSI) have a tendency to offer similar services but they are housed within various divisions, allowing for more purposeful intervention and delivery of services. For example, FPPSI 2 had three different divisions with each division only offering select services and FPPSI 3 also had a similar structure but only focused on a maximum of two services each. The public community college sector attempts to offer a myriad of services, but for the most part, have not increased staff capacity and resources in response to the growing student population.

The findings seem to suggest that the more specialized and deliberate the services, the more successful the institution may be in terms of completion rate. Examining which services have the most impact on student success and then focusing more energy on these services and decreasing or eliminating other services may help the PCC sector better balance its budget and resources.

Research Question 4

What is the organizational structure of student affairs at PCC's and FPPSI's?

Each of the six individuals interviewed were asked to describe the organizational structure of the student affairs division. While neither of the participants specifically named a specific design models, all participants were able to articulate a structure that was analogous with the structures and models defined. Of the PCC sector, two-thirds of the participants aligned their structure with category one and the collegial model; one-third of the participants aligned their institution with a combination of category two and three and the anarchical model. In regards to the FPPSI sector, 100% of the participants identified its structure as a combination of category one and two as well as a combination of the rational and bureaucratic models.

In regards to the hierarchical levels within the public community college sector, two out of three of the institutions report that there are six reporting levels; one of the institutions report five levels. Dissimilar from the PCC sector, each FPPSI's reported different hierarchical levels from one another. One institution reported seven levels, another reported eight levels, and the third one reported five reporting levels, the same as one of the public community colleges in the study. The difference in the reporting level could account for this particular FPPSI only having a student body population of fewer than 1,000 students enrolled, which was also the smallest enrollment for all six institutions selected for the qualitative phase of the study.

In terms of services offered, the participants at each of the public community colleges (PCC) report having a very diverse number of functions offered. One-third reported eight service areas which includes admissions, advising, the student success center, marketing, student relations, research, and the registrar's office. One-third reported thirteen areas including admissions, assessment, athletics, financial aid, counseling, career services, the academic skills center, disability, student life, residence, registrar's office, and multi-cultural services. The final PCC reported ten service areas comprised of admissions, advising, conduct, financial aid, disability, registrar's office, student activities, assessment, and tutoring. The participants from the for-profit post-secondary sector (FPPSI), in contrast to the PCC sector, reported only offering two or three services each. One institution offered academic advising, financial services, and career advising. Another institution provided advisement only, but one focus was on general advising and the other focus was on student resolution. The final FPPSI reported three areas which includes advising, enrollment, and financial services. Worth mentioning, the FPPSI sector generally provided many of the same services as the PCC sector however, the structure was more complex and divided amongst multiple divisions with concentrated functions and separate administrators and staff responsible for each area.

Implications for practice.

Despite the variation in structure, span of control, hierarchical levels, and types of functions provided, the role of student affairs continues to play a critical role in supporting the mission and vision of the institution and supporting the success of students. It is vital that the division of student affairs is respected by the institution as a whole and equally important for the Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO) to have a solid understanding of organizational structures and design models. When possible, the SSAO might try to integrate a model that allows for the infusion of optimal business practices within student affairs processes while maintaining academic integrity and staying true to the department's mission: helping students succeed.

Research Question 5

How do Executive Officers within the PCC and FPPSI determine which services best support student success at their institution?

One hundred percent of the participants from both sectors indicated that they evaluated services on an annual basis to determine which services best supported their student's success. Two-thirds of the respondents indicated that success indicator, such as retention and completion rate, was a component in the decision-making process. One-third of the PCC revealed that they used a national survey to assist in the decision-making process. All of the participants, including the FPPSI, indicated the use of internal surveys to capture the effectiveness of services provided. Only one PCC participant mentioned the use of continuous quality improvement which was a requirement for the institutions reaccreditation process. One of the FPPSI participants pointed out that a collaborative approach was used that involved faculty recommending services from the academic perspective, advisors make suggestions from a non-classroom perspective, and students provide feedback on which services are most pertinent to their success. Once all of the data is compiled, the department heads decide on which services best support its student's success.

The FPPSI sector appeared to be able to respond in a more flexible manner that allows for more autonomy of the student affairs division whereas the PCC sector has a more rigid structure in place. For example, the FPPSI appears to rely on student perception and demands more than the PCC sector and are then able to realign its services accordingly. Also, the sector seems to recognize that sometimes less is more effective in terms of available services. Both sectors reported striving to continuously improve the services being offered.

Implications for practice.

Undeniably, all institutions of higher education are required to track student success indicators for purposes of Title IV funding or accrediting purposes. In general, those success indicators often include completion and retention rates. As part of its annual monitoring reports, the different divisions within the institution often have to make available an evaluation of services provided that supported or contributed to student success. Critical to this success is the role of student affairs. As the division of student affairs is held to higher levels of accountability, anecdotal data is no longer acceptable. Instead, it is expected that reliable data is gathered, analyzed, and employed in the decision-making process. The question to ponder is which method is best when trying to determine how to measure student success. Should it just be a measurement of services offered, a collaborative approach, or merely the SSAO making a decision singlehandedly? Surely, no single answer is best. However, an in-depth understanding and review of various approaches available to the SSAO in regards to which services, structure, and functions most support student success may be required. The researcher does posit, that whichever method is chosen, it must encompass the student's perspective and not just the institution's perception.

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, higher education in this nation, specifically the public community colleges and the for-profit post-secondary institutions, is in a perilous state due to the many challenges each sector is facing. As a commitment is made to once again lead this world in education, an honest evaluation of the systems is pertinent. As each sector continues to encounter such challenges as reduced resources, intense public scrutiny, and large proportions of its student body not being academically prepared, the sector must find a way to respond to these challenges. Student affairs always have been and will continue to be the critical component that connects students to the college, providing support needed to increase chances of success.

The public community college and for-profit sector both play a critical role in ensuring the accessibility of higher education opportunities. As the United States seeks to compete globally and become the leading nation in education once again, the division of student affairs will be integral in supporting the institution. The Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO) may garner a benefit from having knowledge of student affairs best practices and a deeper understanding of the various organizational structure and design models that exists. More specifically, there is a greater advantage to have a model that allows for the infusion of business practices with student affairs processes, while still maintaining academic integrity, and staying true to the profession's initial mission: helping students to succeed.

The Reid-Hart Model for Student Affairs

The Reid-Hart Model for Student Affairs has been developed to assist the Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO) with examining the division and making decisions that would best support the success of its students and the institution as a whole. The model integrates theories originally grounded in the business realm (Open Systems and Contingency Theory) and integrating it with the academic realm (Margaret Culp's Essential Factors for the SSAO). The model focuses on the following elements: (a) organizational structure and design; (b) essential factors that support the SSAO; (c) services provided and; (d) calibration. Figure 11 provides a visual of the Reid-Hart Model for Student Affairs.

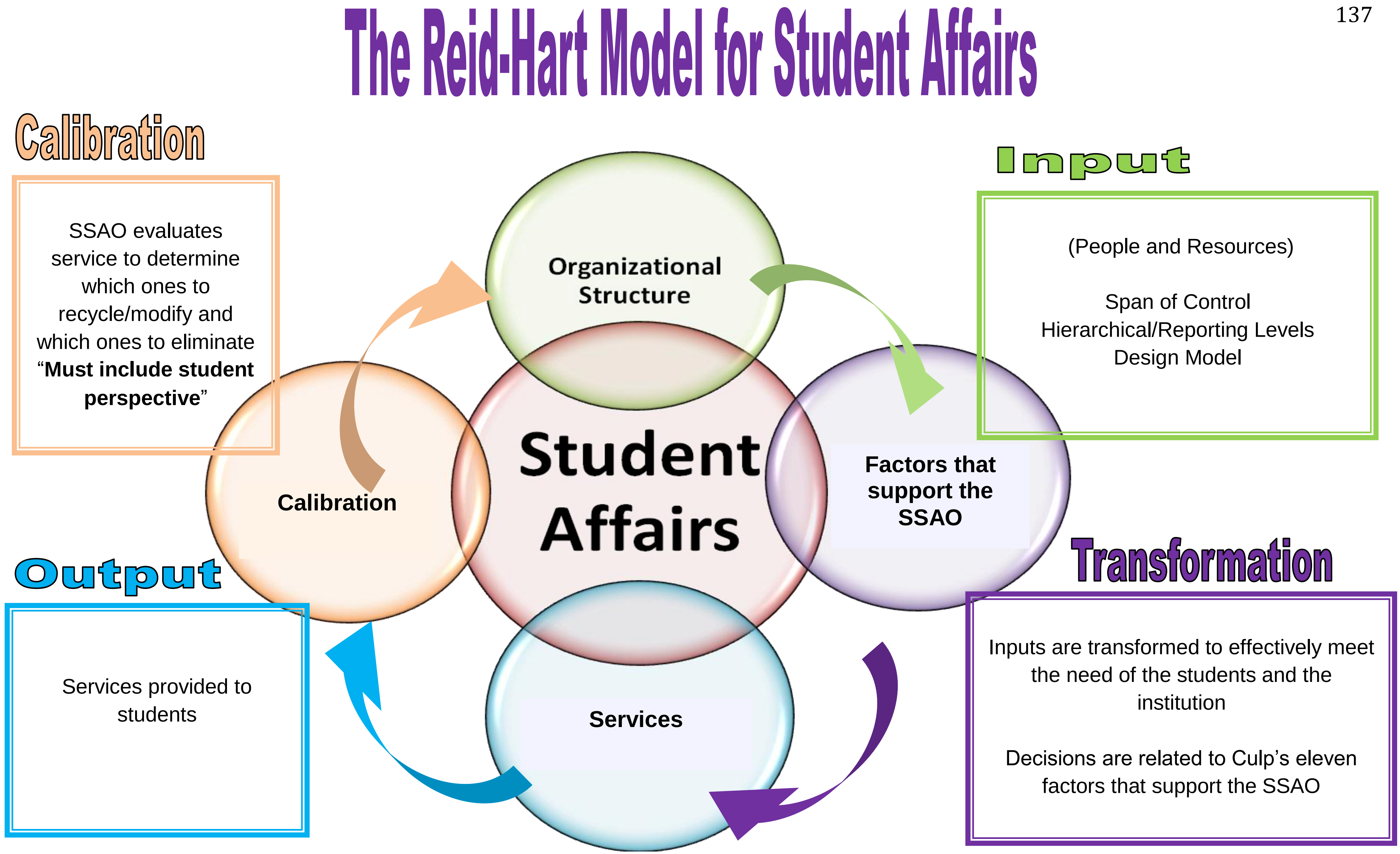


Figure 11. *The Reid-Hart Model for Student Affairs.*
Adapted from the Open Systems & Contingency Theory, and the integration of Margaret Culp's Essential Factors for the SSAO.

Reid-Hart Model: Organizational Structure and Design Model

The first element of the model requires an analysis of the organizational structure and design model that exists at the institution. This analysis should include: (a) the reporting structure, SSAO's direct supervisor; (b) span of control, how many subordinates under the SSAO and; (c) the design model. An understanding of these elements will allow the SSAO to not only recognize how the division of student affairs is viewed within the context of the institution, but will also allow for a more systematic and purposeful approach by the SSAO in how to work and how to get goals accomplished within that viewed context. Basic reporting categories are depicted in Table 33.

Table 33.
Reporting Structures

Category	Reporting Structure	Pro/Cons
One	The SSAO reports directly to the president	SA is in position of equality and influence Invites turf building and alienation
Two	The SSAO reports to an executive vice-president who reports to the president	Potential to dilute the influences and voice of student affairs
Three	One Senior Officer serves as administrator over academic affairs and student affairs	Presents unique opportunities for collaboration and coordination Increases risk that interest of SA will be subordinate

Adapted from: Sandeen & Barr (2006); Culp (1995)

In order to garner a holistic understanding of student affairs, it is imperative that the various models are understood by the Senior Student Affairs Officer. Ambler (1993), Kuh, (1983); Kuk & Banning (2009); and Birnbaum (1988) identified four models which includes the rational-bureaucratic model, the collegial model, the political model and anarchical model. Table 34 provides an overview of the four basic design models.

Table 34
Design Models

Model	**Elements**
Rational-Bureaucratic	Established routines, functions, and processes with a clear chain of command
Collegial	Normative orientation, collaboration, and shared decision-making reached through a consensus
Political	Assumption that decision-making is a bargaining process
Anarchical	Student affairs professionals needing to focus on their small town to survive in the larger context of the institution *typically seen in larger institutions*

Sample questions to determine when trying to identify structure and design:

1. Who does the SSAO report to in the organization?
2. What is the title of the SSAO?
3. Is the SSAO a part of the Presidential Cabinet?
4. How are decisions made at the institution; collaboratively or discretely?
5. Is the organization top down or bottom up?
6. Does the division of student affairs "matter" in the larger context of the institution?
7. How many people report to the SSAO?
8. How many departments exist within the division?
9. Is the current structure and model effective?
10. Does the SSAO have the power to shift the design model; the organizational structure?

Reid-Hart Model: Supporting Factors

The second element of the model includes factors that support student affairs in creating and sustaining functions that truly support the success of its students. There are several factors that can assist the SSAO in sustaining programs that support student success: (a) support from the president and the institution as a whole; (b) a mission-driven organizational structure; (c) data driven culture; (d) ample resources; (e) technology that is useful; (f) programs that engage students; (g) emphasis on quality. These factors would be considered the energies that are needed to transformed the organization and allow for optimal outputs.

Sample questions to ask when examining supporting factors:

1. Does the president understand the critical role of student affairs; how is this understanding exemplified?
2. Does the SSAO have a vital role in planning, programming, and shaping the culture of the college; is the SSAO well respected by the college community?
3. Does the division have clear definitions and expectations?
4. Does the division have adequate resources?
5. Are decisions based upon accurate data?
6. Do programs force student engagement; inside and outside the classroom; is the engagement present from the day the student applies to the college?
7. Is staff valued and offered ample training opportunities?
8. Does the college use technology efficiently and effectively?
9. Does the college value quality?

Reid-Hart Model: Services

The third element of the model is services, which includes an overview of all of the services offered by the Division of Student Affairs. This element should involve the least amount of investigation in terms of identifying services offered, but may require the SSAO to take a more exhaustive examination of how often services are utilized, what percentage of students are using, and the duration that students use the services. The sample template below can assist the SSAO in identifying services used by the division. *The first row has been completed as a guide.*

Type of Service	% of Students utilizing	Average Duration of Services	Method of Tracking	Method	Person responsible
*Academic Advising	100%	Ongoing Minimum 1 Semester	Student System PeopleSoft	Monthly Reports	Director of Advising

Sample questions to ask when examining services:

1. What services does the division offer; how long has service been offered?
2. Who is the direct supervisor for this service?
3. How frequently is the service used by students?
4. How is the service tracked?
5. Are there adequate resources for the service?

Reid-Hart Model: Calibration

Calibration is the final element of the Reid-Hart Model, which will involve the SSAO doing an assessment of the division's programs and services and then adjusting the services accordingly. The model is not designed to provide an assessment tool, however, its purpose is to help guide the SSAO in determining which services to recycle, modify, or discard once the division has participated in its own assessment and evaluation processes. The model strongly encourages that the assessment for student affairs services must include the perspectives of students, faculty, and staff. Further, the SSAO should consider budgetary, technology, and capacity issues for all services when seeking to recalibrate services.

Sample questions to ask for evaluation and assessment:

1. Did students state this service was critical for their success?
2. Is there adequate data to show that this service is effective?
3. Are there adequate resources to sustain the service; can the service integrate more technology and be more efficient; less technology?
4. What does faculty say about the services; are they advocating for a change?
5. What does the literature say in regards to the service?
6. Does the service force student engagement?
7. What modifications, if any, would make this service more effective?
8. Does the service add quality to the student experience; to the institution?
9. Is this service helping students succeed?

The model serves as a first step at gleaning a true understanding of the division of student affairs, how it fits into the institution as a whole, and to provide a guide for SSAO in making decisions that best support student success.

Recommendations for Future Research

While the results of this study garnered in-depth information on the organizational structure, design models, and success indicators for institutions for the public community college and for-profit post-secondary sectors, there is still so much rich information that can be made available through further research study. As a result of the study, there were several areas of concerns that were identified. The research was limited in scope as it only covered the State of Illinois. Many of the Senior Student Affairs Officers (SSAO's) expressed concern with their students not being academically prepared for college-level course work.

However, the data shows that the public community college sectors retention rate is consistent with the for-profit post-secondary sector, yet there is a drastic difference in completion rates. Another area of concern that emerged was a lack of research from the student's perspective comparing the effectiveness of services at both sectors. During the course of this study, it was also discovered that the PCC sector is more transparent than the FPSSI sector, and was thus more willing to allow its students to participate in a research study, whereas, the FPPSI sector was not as willing. Addressed by the public community college sector was the difficulty in being able to adequately provide the true successes of its student body and not just the success indicators. To address these concerns, the following topics are being recommended for future research:

1. Replicate this study to include other geographical regions. Expansion of the research will allow for more in-depth data collection and a more rigorous examination and comparison of findings.
2. A study that examines the academic readiness of students enrolling in the public community college sector versus the for-profit post-secondary institutions and the sectors response to this issue.
3. A comparative study on both sectors that delves into the student's perspective on which student affairs services they felt most contributed to their success. Trends indicate that as the FPPSI sector is scrutinized more intensely, there may be a willingness to be more forthcoming with certain information.

4. An investigative study that would explore the impact of public community colleges redefining program completion, allowing for the encapsulation of its students true intent and not just completion and retention rates as a measure of student success.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Informed Consent – Participant (Qualitative)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study that will take place beginning February 2010 and ending January 2011. This consent form outlines the purpose of the study and provides a description of your involvement and rights as a participant.

I consent to participate in a research project conducted by De' Reese Reid-Hart, a doctoral student at National Louis University located in Chicago, Illinois.

I understand that this study is entitled *Two Paths – One Goal: Exploring Student Affairs Best Practice amongst Public Community Colleges and For-Profit Post Secondary Institutions that Best Support Student Success*. The purpose of this study is to investigate the roles and functions of Student Affairs within Public Community Colleges (PCC's) and For-Profit Post Secondary Institutions (FPPSI's) to identify the core roles and functions that contribute most to student success.

I understand that my participation will consist of a **taped interview** lasting 40-60 minutes in length with a possible second, follow-up interview lasting 40-60 minutes in length. I understand that I have the right to request a copy of my transcribed interview to verify and clarify the information.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and there are no anticipated risks or benefits to me associated with the research. Further, the information gained from this study could be of benefit to community colleges and for profit post secondary institutions in their planning processes.

I understand that I can withdraw at any time until the completion of the dissertation.

I understand that only the researcher, De' Reese Reid-Hart, will have access to a secured file cabinet containing all transcripts, tape recordings, and field notes from the interview(s) in which I participated.

I understand that the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, but my identity will in no way be revealed.

I understand that in the event I have questions or require additional information I may contact the researcher: De' Reese Reid-Hart, 6301 S Halsted, Chicago, Illinois 60621, (773) 602-5118, or Email address: d.reid-hart@comcast.net.

I have been informed that if I have any concerns or questions before or during participation that I feel have not been addressed by De' Reese Reid-Hart, I may contact her Primary Advisor and Dissertation Chair: Dr. Dennis Haynes, National Louis University, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, 60603, (312) 261-3728; Email address: dennis.haynes@nl.edu.

Participant's Signature____ Date__________

Researcher's Signature ____ Date__________

Appendix B

Informed Consent – (Online)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study that will take place beginning February 2010 and ending January 2011. This consent form outlines the purpose of the study and provides a description of your involvement and rights as a participant.

I consent to participate in a research project conducted by De' Reese Reid-Hart, a doctoral student at National Louis University located in Chicago, Illinois.

I understand that this study is entitled *Two Paths – One Goal: Exploring Student Affairs Best Practice amongst Public Community Colleges and For-Profit Post Secondary Institutions that Best Support Student Success*. The purpose of this study is to investigate the roles and functions of Student Affairs within Public Community Colleges (PCC's) and For-Profit Post Secondary Institutions (FPPSI's) to identify the core roles and functions that contribute most to student success.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and there are no anticipated risks or benefits to me associated with the research. Further, the information gained from this study could be of benefit to community colleges and for profit post secondary institutions in their planning processes.

I understand that the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, but my identity will in no way be revealed.

By checking the box below, I certify that I have read and understand the information provided and that I give my consent to participate in the study:

☐ I acknowledge that I have read the above information and I further give my consent to participate in the study.

Appendix C

Senior Student Affairs Officer Survey

General Information

1. Official Title:

   ☐ Vice-President ☐ Dean ☐ Director ☐ Other: ____________________

2. Gender:

   ☐ Male ☐ Female

3. Institution Type:

   ☐ Public Community College ☐ For-Profit Post Secondary

4. Please indicate the length of time you have been in your current position:

   ☐ 2 years ☐ 3 years ☐ 4 years ☐ 5 or more years

5. Who do you report to in your institution:

   ☐ President ☐ Vice-President ☐ Dean ☐ Other: ____________________

6. Are you a part of the Executive Cabinet at your institution?

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Is there a mission statement for your department:

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please provide: ____

____

8. Please rank in order the top 3 services that you feel most support your student's success:

____

____

____

9. Does your department evaluate the services provided to students?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Appendix D

Institutional Data Collection Form

Data Retrieved on:____________________

Name of School: _________________________________ Type: ____________

Services provided by Student Affairs:

Advising Services	Assessment/Testing	Bursar's/Business
Campus Bookstore	Campus Social Activities	Career Services
Counseling	Cultural Programs	Discipline
Disability Services	Diversity Programs	Financial Aid
Intramural Sports	Job Placement	Library Resources
New Student Orientation	Peer Mentors	Peer Tutors
Registration/Enrollment Service	Security	Student Center
Student Success Course/Freshman Seminar		
Stud Gov/Student Organizations		
Tutoring Lab	Other ____________	

E-Advising Services:
☐ Yes ☐ No

Instant chat on website:
☐ Yes ☐ No

Mandatory online registration:
☐ Yes ☐ No

First year experience program:
☐ Yes ☐ No

Online resolution for student issues/complaints:
☐ Yes ☐ No

Employment Services provided:
☐ Yes ☐ No

Completion Rate: ___________Retention Rate: _____________Job Placement Rate: ________

Number of Student Affairs Personnel:

Advisors	Financial Aid	Career Services	Other
Administration	Professional Staff	Counselors	Other
		Other	Other

Revenue Sources by percentage:

Amount	Percentage	Amount	Percentage
Tuition and Fees		Other	
State Revenue		Other	
Property Tax			

Student Affairs Revenue Distribution: Amount:_____________ Percentage: _________

Accreditation: ____

Notes:

Appendix E

Interview Protocol for Participants

Q1. What is the organizational structure of your institution; of the department? Do you sit on the presidential cabinet?

Q2. What services does your department currently provide to students? Which services are utilized the most and how often? Which services are mandated or strongly encouraged?

Q3. How and in what ways do you determine which services best support your student's success?

Q4. How does your institution define and track student success?

Q5. What do you feel is the biggest barrier for your department in regards to the services it provides to students?

Q6. What do you feel is the biggest barrier for your student blocking their overall success? What is your department's response to address this barrier?

Q7. Please describe the budget allocation process at your institution?

Appendix F

Results of Senior Student Affairs Officer Survey: Question 8

Please rank in order, the top 3 services that you feel is the most critical in supporting your student's success:

	Response Rate	Response Percentage
FIRST CHOICE		
Academic Advising	14	**74%**
Financial Aid	2	11%
Admissions, Emergency Crisis Intervention, & Orientation *Each area listed had a response rate of (1) and percentage of (5)*	1	5%
SECOND CHOICE		
Financial Aid	8	**42%**
Advising	3	16%
Career Planning	2	11%
Connecting with faculty, Library Resources, Personal Counseling, Student Success Seminar, Tutoring *Each area listed had a response rate of (1) and percentage of (5)*	1	5%
THIRD CHOICE		
Tutoring	4	**21%**
New Student Orientation	2	11%
Online Support Services	2	11%
Personal Counseling & Career Coaching	2	11%
Academic Support, Career Services, Identified Goal, Orientation, Peer Mentors, Peer Tutors, Records, Student Life,	1	5%

Appendix G

Researcher's Resume

De' Reese L. Reid-Hart

[redacted]

PROFILE

Administration, teaching, curriculum development, advising, and training experience intensified with strong liberal arts and counseling education. Excellent verbal and written communication skills. Proficient with Word, Works, Power Point, Access, and PeopleSoft.

EDUCATION

Doctoral Candidate, May 2011
National Louis University, Chicago
Major: Doctorate in Education
Community College Leadership

Master of Science in Educational Psychology, May 1996
Eastern Illinois University, Charleston
Major: Counseling

Bachelor of Arts, May 1995
Eastern Illinois University, Charleston
Major: English Minor: Pre-Law

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Direct supervision of Academic Advising, implementation of intrusive advising, e-advising services, and online degree application Direct supervision of all divisions of Student Service at the satellite campus, DTI
- Provided training to the campus on CCC student and academic policy as well as student code of conduct
- Participation on District Wide Strategic Planning Committee
- Development of the departmental annual tactical plan
- Creation and facilitation CE courses
- Management of retention program and Annual Program Service review
- Creation of the Student Service handbook for HLC reaccreditation visit
- Monitoring and evaluation of programs and services

De’ Reese L. Reid-Hart, p. 2

[redacted]

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Associate Dean of Student Services, Kennedy-King College
February 2008 - present Chicago, Illinois
Co-supervised functional areas of student services including academic advising, registrar’s office, admissions, student activities and athletics. Implemented an early warning system, intrusive advising module, and new student recruitment and enrollment services. Responsible for the entire student service division at the satellite campus. Prepared annual budget and departmental tactical plan. Trainer for the Institutional Leadership Academy. Developed educational plans for all degree and certificate programs.

Assistant Dean of Student Services, Kennedy-King College
May 2006 – Present Chicago, Illinois
Supervised the academic advisement department and all student clubs and activities.

English as a Second Language Instructor, Poder Learning Institute
May 2005 – June 2006 Chicago, Illinois
Develop syllabus, provide overall course structure, and complete student evaluations.

Academic Advisor, *Kennedy King College*
July 2004 – Present Chicago, Illinois
Provide academic and career counseling to all students, coordinate new student orientation, and assist students with re-admittance to college.

Youth Development Coordinator, *Uhlich Children’s Advantage Network*
December 2002 – July 2004 Chicago, Illinois
Coordinate all aspects of the youth development program including supervising, hiring, training, and quarterly evaluations of staff. Developed all training material and curriculum development as well as marketing media for the program.

Coordinator, *WBCO*
August 2000 – September 2002 Georgetown, Texas
Coordinate and provide observation and consultation to all agency-wide school based centers. Implement guidelines for development of mental health component in classrooms. Analyze teaching strategies and interaction of students. Facilitate and develop staff and parent training.

De' Reese L. Reid-Hart, p. 3

[redacted]

Assistant Counselor/Lecturer, *Kennedy –King Community College*
September 1997 – August 2000 Chicago, Illinois
Developed summer program to assist students with transition into college. Designed and facilitated program events, workshops and training. Designed brochures and all advertisement tools for program. Monitored budget and expenditures of program. Taught college educational courses & provided career and academic counseling. Managed student career center.

Therapist, *Metropolitan Family Services*
November 1996 – January 1999 Chicago, Illinois
Provide various modes of therapy to individuals, couples and families. Assisted with the design and development for citywide violence prevention campaign. Developed and designed curriculum, facilitate parenting workshops and school-based groups for students & faculty. Provided domestic violence intervention to victims including, individual and group counseling, assessment, and referral.

Assistant Business Manager, *The Daily Eastern News*
January 1992 - May 1996 Charleston, Illinois
Supervised the daily operations of the human resource, marketing, and business departments, deposited daily financial transactions. Reported and computed monthly and fiscal year budget, interviewed persons for hire and termination. Computed and dispensed payroll for approximately two hundred employees. Processed accounts payable/receivable, requisitions, check requests, and departmental purchase orders.

ORGANIZATIONS & ACTIVITIES

The Institutional Planning and Management Committee, Kennedy-King College
APSA Committee
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated
S.T.A.R. Media Advisory Board

CONFERENCES /WORKSHOPS

Community Response to Domestic Violence - **Presenter**
Stress Management - **Facilitator**
Families and Schools Working Together - **Facilitator**
South Side Teens about Respect - **Facilitator**
Children's Conference: ADHD & Compassion Fatigue
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
Assessment Training
Life Enrichment Group
Effective Treatment Planning
Effective Parenting - **Facilitator**